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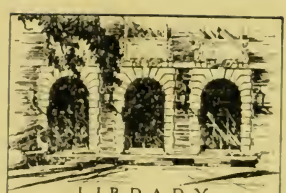

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THE

WIFE.

A NOVEL.

M. and S. Brooke, Printers,
Paternoster-Row, London.

THE

WIFE.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By MARIA BENSON,
Author of "Thoughts on Education."

"I have, when soliloquising or communing with my own thoughts, been ready to exclaim, Who is the faithful friend of man—is it not woman? Without her affectionate assiduity how would he be preserved through the dangers attendant on the helpless state of infancy? Is she not equally to be regarded as the cheering companion in youth, the friend and consoler through middle life?—Lastly, the endearing partner who soothes the infirmities of age, and tends to ward off the attacks of disease by attentions which mitigate pain, though they cannot wholly banish it. —To sum up all—Is she not the friend that is nearer than a *brother*, who supports that pillow on which the wearied head seeks to find repose when on the very verge of eternity."

"*Thoughts and Remarks on establishing an Institution for the Support and Education of unportioned respectable Females.*"—By Helena Whitford.

Vol. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1810.

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CHAPTER XXX.

"I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins, that almost freezes up the heat of life."

At night when Jessica rose to retire, as she was leaving the room, "Jessica," said her husband, she paused as she held the lock of the door in her hand, "No, it is no matter," said he, "but yet,"—and going to her, Valdesa tenderly embraced her.

Jessica felt his hand tremble, as grasped within her own, his voice faul-

tered, and he articulated something which she could not understand. She now threw herself on her knees, and conjured him as he valued her peace, to be explicit.

"Why this strange mystery," said she, "and the sadness that oppresses you?" "Jessica," interrupted Valdesa, "I entreat you to be calm, retire to your own room, and I will follow you."

Accustomed to obey him in every request, she did so. In a few minutes after Valdesa entered the apartment; he complained of fatigue, and Jessica did not again address him.

In the morning when she awoke, it was later than usual. She had passed a disturbed and restless night. Valdesa had already quitted the room, and Jessica arose immediately; on going down, she enquired of the servant where his master was, and he informed her, that he had not seen the Signor since the night before. This was an unusual cir-

cumstance; Valdesa seldom left the house at so early an hour, and Jessica wondered what could have occasioned his now doing so; fatal forebodings rushed on her mind, and ordering the servant to take away the breakfast things, she seated herself by the window, hoping, yet fearing, some tidings of him.

Long, however, she did not remain in suspence. A crowd round the window attracted her attention, and she beheld the form of her husband apparently lifeless, supported in the arms of a stranger.

Jessica rushed into the passage, and clasping him to her bosom, implored the assistance of the stranger, to convey him to his apartment, where a new scene of misery awaited. As Jessica saw Valdesa laid on the bed, pale, inanimate, the blood streaming from his side, her senses seemed threatning to forsake her. She knelt by the bed, and called on her father, Mr. Hanbury, and all

those who had been most dear to her, entreating that he might not be torn from her.

"I am thine," said she, "and the grave shall not divide us."

A surgeon had by this time entered the room; he requested that Jessica might be taken from it, saying that the operation could not be performed whilst she remained there.

When her mind had become more calm, the gentleman who accompanied Valdesa to his lodgings, and whose humanity had been so conspicuously shewn in his attentions to herself and her husband, informed Jessica of the nature of the circumstance which had given rise to this sad event.

A quarrel which had taken place between Valdesa and a gentleman at the English hotel, the evening but one prior to the meeting, had been the occasion of this duel, from which he said

he hoped the Signor had returned only slightly wounded.

The surgeon now appeared to calm the fears of Jessica, by assuring her that he had extracted the ball, and he had no doubt that his patient would do well; that the faintness which had so much alarmed her merely proceeded from loss of blood; that the ball had penetrated below the right shoulder, and not in any part to excite apprehensions for the gentleman's safety; that she might return to the room, but must use every caution to prevent his being disturbed, since he now appeared inclined to sleep.

Jessica left the gentlemen together, and immediately returned to the apartment of her husband: as she viewed his death-like countenance on entering the door, a sudden faintness came over her, and she clung to a chair for support; then feebly tottering to the bed, she prayed for his restoration; "Are these,"

thought Jessica, "the laws of honour, false delusive notions, to which those higher principles of morality and religion are daily sacrificed! Had Mr. Hanbury yet lived, what would have been now his feelings! Oh, Valdesa, how different were his sentiments, how opposite the Christian precepts which he inculcated. When bowed beneath the weight of injuries like his, he harboured no proud resentments, but nobly sustained them all; happy is it for him that the grave has concealed this sad event from his eyes!"

Jessica continued watching by the side of her husband for many hours, during which he slept calmly; and when the surgeon returned in the evening, she again quitted his chamber.

In a short time, however, the surgeon rejoined her, and mentioned that the Signor was awake, and wished much to see her.

Jessica hastened back to him. He

was sat up in bed supported by pillows, and at her approach he raised himself to embrace her.

Jessica threw her arms around him, and concealing her face in his neck, she burst into an agony of tears. They were the first she had shed since this event, and her almost breaking heart, too much oppressed for words, found this method of relief.

Jessica's sensations too were of a mingled kind, when the past, the present, and the future were before her. She had loved Valdesa with the most heart-felt tenderness; but her affection had been founded on the solid basis of esteem, and she could not now conceal from herself, though willingly she would have done it, that that esteem *must* suffer some diminution, and in the future prospect she tremblingly apprehended that the happiness which she had enjoyed, could no more in the same degree await her.

"Have I not," thought she, "been taught to hold this fatal practice in abhorrence; has he not endangered his peace, by risking the life of a fellow mortal? has he not sacrificed, at the shrine of honour on a mistaken notion, those principles which every responsible being ought to prize beyond all human considerations? What are the one when placed in competition with the other?

Jessica arose unable to suppress the agitation of her mind, and retired to a part of the room where the curtains of Valdesa's bed concealed her from his view.

She had not yet become acquainted with the particulars of this affair; her feelings had, indeed, already suffered too severe a conflict, to make any enquiries respecting it: nor had she dared to ask what had been the fate of Valdesa's antagonist.

Jessica hoped, however, that as she had not yet heard any tidings of him,

that her husband had been the most severe sufferer.

As Jessica was sat by Valdesa's side, adjusting his bandages and tenderly enquiring how he felt himself, he assured her that he was easy; that the pain of his wound had considerably abated, and requested she would leave him, and endeavour to get some rest. She prepared to do so. A servant entered the room, and informed Jessica that a gentleman, a Monsieur Delaborde, who attended the Signor to his lodging, requested to speak with her.

She sent word she would wait on him immediately, and leaving the servant with Valdesa, hastened to him.

After the usual salutation had passed, Jessica apologized for not having before returned him thanks for his humane attentions; "but my situation," continued she, "and the unhappy state in which you see me, must plead in excuse for the omission."

Jessica's appearance was, indeed, a sufficient corroboration of her wretchedness; pale with grief and want of rest, with her dressing gown thrown round her, she had descended to the apartment; and as Monsieur fixed his eye on her woe-worn countenance, the tear of compassion burst from it, and forced its way down his cheek.

"Have you no friends," said he, "Madam, whom you would do me the honour to permit of my addressing on this occasion; it might at least afford you some comfort to know that they were apprized of this event."

Jessica felt the tears rise to her eyes at this well-meant kindness; she did not check them, but sat in silence till her emotion had subsided.

"You are kind, indeed, Sir," said she, "and I sensibly feel your compassion, but I have no friends to whom I can trouble you to apply. I have been so unfortunate as to lose the

dearest, indeed almost the only friend I had, since our residence here, and there is none now whom I could address on this subject, nor would it be in the power of any one to afford me consolation, or to mitigate any part of what I feel."

"I am grieved, indeed," continued Monsieur, "at this information, since I fear that under present circumstances it will be necessary for the Signor to leave Montpelier, and your attending him might be productive of unpleasant consequences."

"How," said Jessica, "to what do you allude?" Fatal forebodings rushed on her mind. She dreaded to hear the sequel; yet, assuming all the calmness she could summon, "My husband's antagonist is then dangerously wounded," said she. "Indeed," replied Monsieur, "that is, I fear, too true."

"He is a stranger in this place, nor was he, I find, at all known at the hotel;

we have therefore no clue by which to discover the abode of his friends, whilst he remains in his present insensible state. I should, however, advise the Signor to depart this night. My father, who is one of the officers of police, may else, I fear, be under the necessity of exerting a very painful part of his authority.

"A card of address has been found in the coat pocket of the stranger, on which was written the name of Greville. Charles Greville, I believe, to the best of my recollection, was the name, but as that is not sufficient to throw any light upon the subject, the matter is yet enveloped in doubt."

Monsieur was proceeding, when piercing cries arrested his attention, and on turning round he beheld Jessica, pale, and apparently senseless, sunk upon the floor. He rung the bell, and the servants coming to her assistance, they conveyed her to a window, where in a

few moments she opened her eyes, and seemed fully sensible to the miseries of her situation.

The first object that darted on her mind was that of her brother, murdered by the hand of her husband. "For what calamity," said she, "am I next reserved? Lead me to my chamber, where no human voice can reach me. Oh, that the hand of death would ease me of my sufferings! but stay, I will go to him; yes, I will watch over him, I will follow him to the grave; he shall rest where Mr. Hanbury lies; and then we shall all be happy." Here a convulsive laugh terminated this paroxysm, and Jessica again relapsed into insensibility. They carried her to her own room, and Monsieur hastened to relieve the mind of Valdesa, who, alarmed by the confusion he had heard, sent down to enquire into the occasion of it.

Jessica continued in this state, with very few intervals of rest, for several hours.

When she opened her eyes, and beheld her husband leaning over her, she accused him of having destroyed some person very dear to her; and turning from him, covered her face, as if his presence filled her with horror.

The surgeon who attended Valdesa ordered her an anodyne draught, which produced the desired effect. Jessica slept tranquilly for an hour, but exhausted by her late severe conflict, awoke very weak and languid. Her look of agony, when Valdesa returned to the apartment, and taking her hand affectionately, pressed it between his, and enquired how she felt herself, and the expression of something, nearly amounting to horror, as she involuntarily shrunk back, struck on Valdesa's heart, as conveying reproaches which, though he felt he deserved, he could not bear from her.

In a visit from his surgeon, who had roused him to a sense of the danger of

his longer continuance at Montpelier, he had however experienced much pain.

Monsieur Delaborde, whom he wished to have consulted on the subject of his departure, had a few hours since been suddenly called from town, and immediate flight was now Valdesa's only resource. But to leave Jessica in her present situation was so dreadful to his feelings, that he hesitated whether to remain on the spot, and incur the risk to which such a step exposed him rather than quit her.

Her future comfort was, however, to be considered, and this Valdesa reflected would be more endangered by his longer residence with her.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Nor perchance,
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes those gleams
Of past existence. Wilt thou then forget,
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together.

WORDSWORTH.

VALDESA called up all the fortitude of which he was possessed to his aid, and prepared himself for the parting interview with that object dearest to his heart.

When he got into the room, he found that Jessica had been taking some refreshment, and appeared more composed.

Valdesa seated himself on the bed, and leaning his head upon his hand, he

paused, considering how to address her; he thought he saw her look reproachfully towards him, and he then broke the silence which he had hitherto preserved.

"Jessica my love," said he, "I am come to bid you farewell, let no regrets cloud the peace of this interview, the last that may be permitted me for a long, long, time perhaps," and he would have added, "that I may ever enjoy," when his voice became inarticulate and he stopt.

"I am conscious," Valdesa continued, "that I have not fulfilled the duties of a husband, I have by one action sacrificed the happiness of her whose peace it ought to have been my study to preserve."

"My own heart, Jessica, has sufficiently accused me, it has whispered all those complaints which, though delicacy forbade your uttering, your looks have conveyed."

"These have entered deeply, they

have wrung me to the soul, and I feel, most keenly feel, the conviction that you merited a happier fate than that which has awaited you in an union with me.

Valdesa darted one glance at Jessica, expecting only averted looks, and that expression which her countenance had lately worn, when he beheld her melted into tears.

"Why cannot I accompany you then?" said she, and was proceeding, when the image of her brother again came across her; she hesitated.

"No," interrupted Valdesa, "that would be imprudent at the present juncture, and might lead to future difficulties. My flight will be safer if I am alone, and will afford opportunities of concealment or escape, which your accompanying me might prevent."

"I trust that these subterfuges will not be necessary, that I may soon be enabled to return to you, in the mean

time my Jessica will write to me and tell me of every thing which interests her; I have fixed upon England as the place of my destination, for two reasons, one, that I know you will there best like to join me, should I be excluded the hope of returning to you, and a vessel, which I learn is ready to sail at break of day for that country, is another motive by which I am induced to give it the preference."

In conversing with Jessica, the time passed insensibly away; sometimes she replied to Valdesa's remarks, and then, gloomy and abstracted, sunk into her former state.

"My husband is still ignorant of the extent of my misery," thought she, "he cannot be fully sensible of the injury I have sustained, I will not then add to his feelings by revealing to him the fatal secret of which I am apprized, no, the anguish of my heart shall still be buried there."

Valdesa quitted Jessica for a few moments, and on ascending the stairs to rejoin her, his attention was roused by hearing her voice as if in conversation with some person; he involuntarily stopt, and her lamentations again sounded on his ear.

"My husband," said she, "knows not how very dear to me is that life, which he has endangered; he must be the same, Monsieur Delaborde could not be mistaken. Yet this fatal secret shall rest in my heart, Valdesa shall not have the misery of knowing."

Valdesa heard no more, for tears now choaked her utterance. Could it be possible, he thought, that the stranger whom he had wounded was the object of any former attachment? Jessica spoke too of Monsieur Delaborde; of what could he have informed her, or what circumstance connected with the stranger could he be acquainted with?

The agony of Jessica's mind, and

the marks of horror which she had shewn on her first interview with him, after Monsieur Delaborde's visit, again rushed on Valdesa's imagination; he had no opportunity of seeing Monsieur again, since he must be under the necessity of leaving Montpelier under favour of the night.

He went into his room, and wrote a few hurried lines to that gentleman, requesting that if any particulars should occur respecting the affair, he would have the kindness to impart them, and recommended Jessica to his protection.

Valdesa now hastened to Jessica; when he entered the room, she was seated at the window, despair in every lineament of her countenance, and the traces of tears still on her cheek. Valdesa seated himself by her, suspended between doubt and affection. "Why," said he, "my Jessica, those tokens of grief; is it for me that you thus mourn,

and embitter a life, which is so much more precious to me than my own? Or does some latent cause give rise to the agitation which I have witnessed? You have once reproached me with a want of openness, may I not now retaliate? Tell me then what has occasioned these feelings? We are going to part, the moments are gliding rapidly away, and I must soon be severed from all that I hold dear; let me then leave you with the consolation of knowing that you still love me."

"I do love you indeed," said Jessica, "heaven is my witness how faithfully, and how ardently." She raised her eyes and clasping her hands together, floods of tears poured down her face, and fell into her bosom. Valdesa was deeply moved, and could not doubt her sincerity, when he beheld the almost angelic purity of her countenance.

Jessica had suffered much from the late terrible catastrophe. The moments

were fast approaching, when her husband was to be torn from her, the recollection of her departed friend, the benediction which he had so solemnly pronounced upon them when he joined their hands, his fervent prayers for their felicity, all rushed on her saddened imagination: that felicity now destroyed, that dear friend mingling with the dust, her brother perhaps expiring by the hand of her husband, and all this sad reverse the work of a few months.

"Oh happiness!" exclaimed she, "where art thou to be found? not surely in this perishable state of being, where our comforts are but for a moment, and every joy fluctuating as the winds of heaven.

"It has occurred to me," said Jessica to her husband, when she had assumed sufficient calmness, "that you have no resemblance of your wife, and perhaps it may be some comfort to you to have

my shadow at least, for your companion."

"Certainly," replied Valdesa, "except the original, I should prize it more than any other possession." Jessica rising, went to a small cabinet, and taking from it a picture, she presented it to him.

"This was drawn for my father," said Jessica, "by a painter of eminence in England; previous to his death, he bequeathed it to Mr. Hanbury, I now present it to you, uniting in the possession those three beings whom I have most loved—If we should never meet more, you will prize it for my sake, and when the cold grave shall have deprived you of the original, in contemplating that you will cherish her memory.

"You are leaving me, Valdesa, to wander I know not whither, the period of your return to me uncertain, one sad hour may be the last which is per-

mitted us to enjoy. Oh then, think of me when far distant, and remember that my every hope of comfort rests with you; much of that comfort has already been diminished, by one fatally rash act, but that is past, and to the future we must trust for repose.

"I mean not to reproach you, I have suffered, and still do suffer too severely; I only implore you to restrain those passions that, amidst all your virtues, sometimes usurp the dominion; our passions deceive us, they dress themselves in the most flattering garb, and assuming sometimes even the appearance of virtue to beguile us, they lead on to actions which, if not criminal, may yet embitter the peace of those dear to us, and destroy our temporal comforts.

"Forgive me, I confess this only circumstance has ever disturbed the tranquillity that I have hitherto enjoyed, and has given me a wound which

none could inflict but those I fondly love."

Jessica ceased, and bursting into tears Valdesa took her hand. "Jessica," he said, "believe me, I am fully sensible of the value of those admonitions which you have given me, my respect for you neither time or distance can weaken, my affections you have long possessed; and this last proof of your regard has, if possible, encreased my value for you."

"I entreat you to be careful of your health for my sake, and to wait with composure for the period that may give back to your arms that husband, from whom untoward unhappy circumstances now separate you."

The hour was fast advancing which was to divide them; Valdesa rose, looked at his watch, and recollecting himself, went to the bureau. "I forget," said he, "whilst talking of the future, to provide for its necessities, and after

the long conversation which you, my Jessica, must recollect a few days since, this seems surprising; but, forcing a smile, it is like the absence of mind with which a man conducts himself who is going to part from his wife for the first time.

Valdesa now took out a purse, "I am not quite so well stored," he added, "as I ought to be for a voyage and pilgrimage to a foreign land; but my love must nevertheless permit me to share with her." "And what," said Jessica, "is to become of you there? should you be exposed to the hardships of poverty."

"No," whilst the tears trickled down her cheeks, "leave me to struggle with those, should they await us, the burthen shall be mine."

"I am in health, you are sick, and wounded, I shall find some means of support, when present resources fail,

preserve for me still your affection, to all else I am indifferent."

But Jessica reasoned like one who had never experienced the pressure of want; suddenly recollecting herself, "I have just been thinking," said she, "that you can call on Mr. Gurney when you arrive in London, and there receive an additional supply of cash."

"I have never yet received any part of the two thousand pounds vested with him, how fortunate that my wants have been so few, and that those have been supplied by kind friends. For in your present situation this will be a comfortable resource."

"No Jessica," interrupted Valdesa, "I cannot listen to such a proposal; that sum I hold to be sacredly your's, and nothing but the horrors of want should tempt me to appropriate any part of it to my own purpose.

"Do not impose on me the burthen of pecuniary obligations, added to what I

already feel. I have made you sufficiently poor, my love, by robbing you of your happiness, but my short hour has already I find elapsed, and I must bid you farewell", and going up to her, "may the Almighty," said he, "bless and comfort you, and re-unite you to your wretched husband." Valdesa clasped Jessica in his arms, whilst, pale and trembling, she sunk on his shoulder, and after a hurried embrace, tore himself from her.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"Thus have we parted, rich in sorrow, though parting poor."

SHAKESPEARE.

JESSICA retired to her solitary chamber, and after offering up her prayers for her husband's safety, she threw herself on the bed, and endeavoured to compose her mind, where, for the first time, sensations had entered nearly bordering on despair.

It is a terrible reflection, that amongst so many of the calamities which befal us, the innocent are so often not equal sufferers, because, divested of guilt, there is no real misery, but that they are so frequently doomed to suffer with the

guilty; and perhaps great part of the felicity which awaits us in a better state of being, may arise from the dissolution of connections which involve the individual in so many miseries, by making him dependent for his comfort on those around him.

Jessica, in surveying the past, saw nothing there to raise one pang of self reproach; she had under every circumstance conducted herself to the best of her judgment, and yet she was now thrown into a situation where, in looking round, she had but one reflection; the consciousness of rectitude to comfort and console her.

As the wind whistled in low murmurs, and the rain in torrents beat against the casement of her chamber, she thought of her husband exposed to the elements, committed to the mercy of the waves; and then the form of her brother, bleeding, dying, next presented itself.

Unable to bear her sensations, Jessica

rose from the bed, and throwing on a night gown, she attempted to beguile the hours by reading; a prayer book which was laid near the bed was that she chose for her perusal.

She opened into a part of it that spoke comfort to her, when those words of the Psalmist arrested her attention: "I have been young, and now am old, yet never saw I the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging their bread." "Ah! my father," she exclaimed, "then your child may yet be comforted; your hand was extended to the relief of the unfortunate, your heart open to their prayers, and that reward now awaits you, which your deeds on earth so justly merited!"

Jessica continued reading, and occasionally traversing the apartment, till she heard the servants in the rooms below. She then finished her dress, and, assuming a look of composure, descended the stairs. When the man-servant waited upon her at breakfast, Jessica could not

help observing the kind solicitude which was marked in his countenance; he spoke softly, and in a tone of compassion that wrung her heart.

Philip was an English man, and had lived in Mr. Hanbury's service, with whom he was a great favourite many years: Jessica knew that he was perfectly well acquainted with the person of her brother, and thought that there was none in whom she could so well confide to make enquiries after him.

"Philip," said she, when he next came into the room, "I have a little commission for you, which I know you will faithfully execute."

"That," replied the old man, "I will do to the best of my power, or any thing else which I can do for you."

He wiped a tear from his cheek with the sleeve of his coat: "Excuse my freedom," added he, "madam," whilst his voice faultered, "I would walk to the end of the world to make you happier;

I have not forgot when my poor wife was so ill, many years ago, and you were with your dear father visiting my good master, how you used to come and sit by her, and comfort her, and give her money; and how you cloathed my Sarah after she lost her mother, and how," added he, sobbing with grief, "you sat by her when she was dying, and all your kindness to me. No, no, I hope though I have come into foreign parts, I have an English heart of my own, and please God to give me health and strength, I'll stay by my lady to the last."

"Enough of this," said Jessica, "and, now Philip, I must inform you of the nature of my commission; it is to go to the lodging of the wounded gentleman, and enquire after his health You recollect," said she pausing, "you recollect my brother." "Yes," replied he, "madam, I remember him well—many's the scrape that master Charles has been in, and then he used always to come and

tell me;—aye, aye, but them days are past."

Jessica now anxious to hasten Philip's departure, interrupted him; "I wish then," said she, "that you would endeavour to learn the name of this gentleman, if that is possible, and enquire particularly into the state of his health. I fear your seeing him would not be practicable." Jessica then directed Philip to the English hotel, and requested that he would lose no time.

In less than half an hour from his setting out, though to Jessica the time appeared tediously long, Philip returned. As she saw him enter the door, her sensations were indeed of an agonizing kind, in one word or look her misery might be sealed. She dared scarcely raise her head on his coming into the room, for fear of gathering something from the expression of his countenance to confirm her doubts.

But when Jessica heard the chearful

tone in which Philip spoke, those were in some degree dispelled.

" I am come back to you," said he, " madam, with joyful news, which I was so anxious to bring that I have walked till my breath is so spent that I can hardly tell it you.

" Well, when I got to the inn, they told me the gentleman was not there, but they shewed me to his lodgings; a woman opened the door, she was one of them young French girls that I can't say Iv'e any great respect for. I couldn't understand her much, but as I found she did not know my tongue, I tried as well as I could to talk to her in her own; now it's surprising to me, madam, that people must have so many ways of talking, when one would just answer as well,—well, but this won't finish my story.

" I asked her if some gentleman didn't lodge there that had got some bad wound or misfortune, because I had a little matter of busines with him.

"She told me there was such a one, but I might tell her what I wanted, she could do as well. I don't know that said I, and I had rather see him myself

"However she told me I couldn't do that, for nobody saw him but the nurse and the doctors, and, besides he was asleep. Well, I said, suppose I wish to see him asleep, where will be the great harm of that? it will be better you know, because I shan't disturb him.

"Come, come, I said, we must not stand here, and putting some money into her hand, that's the only way my lady to deal with these people in foreign parts, I told her just to let me look at him.

"You must step softly then, said she, and we went up stairs. Well, she opened the room door, and I stept softly up to the bed; he seemed fast asleep, and I found he was nobody I had ever cast eyes on before.

"But he's an officer, that I'm sure

of, and I think he's an Englishman, for his cloaths were hung up in the room, and all seemed proper enough—no French frippery.

"So I said to the girl, now said I, I am ready to go as soon as you like. I see the gentleman's getting better, for I wanted to hear what she thought. Oh, yes, she said, he's much better, I don't think there's any danger of him now. Well, said I, that's so much the better, he seems a proper Englishman enough, and I wish him well with all my heart.

"She didn't look over and above pleased at that; however, I had got to know all that I wanted, I saw it was nobody I knew, and his name was nothing to me, indeed the young girl couldn't tell it me, by reason that she did't know it."

"Indeed," said Jessica, "I am very grateful to you, Philip, and know not how I can sufficiently reward you; you must, however, allow me to reimburse you for

the money you lad out at the lodgings;" and putting a louis d'or into his hand, "take this," continued she, "I do not ask you to spend it, but when you look at it you will have the satisfaction of reflecting that you received it in return for an action that gave joy to the heart of your mistress."

Old Philip would not, however, hear of this little present, and would only receive the trifling sum which he had given to the girl. "No," he said, "I hope I know how to discharge my duty; or God knows I've lived in the world, and travelled to foreign parts for little purpose."

He now withdrew, and left Jessica comparatively blest. "How much," exclaimed she, "have I to be grateful for; what were my sensations an hour ago, when I believed my brother to be dying, my husband his murderer! From these two calamities am I freed, and never can I be sufficiently thankful for the blessings which are spared to me!

She withdrew to her chamber, and endeavoured to obtain that repose of which she stood so much in need; and after sleeping tranquilly for some hours, when she rose, sat down to consider whether it would be prudent to write to Valdesa at the present juncture; however, she feared that such a step might lead to a discovery, and at length determined to wait till she heard of his arrival in England; for uncertain when her letter might reach him, she thought it better to defer it.

CHAPTER XXXII.

And how her sinking heart recoil'd,
And how her throbbing bosom beat,
And how sensation almost left
Her cold convulsed feet.

ANON.

SHUT up within the gloomy walls of the castle of Archelino, did Emilie yet remain a prisoner. Her mind unappalled by the dark clouds of adversity; her fortitude still unshaken, patiently waiting, and calmly hoping for a brighter day. These were the comforts of a consience pure and untainted.

The Marchese ranged abroad miserable, and condemned to the worst species of slavery, a mind fettered and oppressed.

Emilie, confined to the narrow boundaries of her prison, enjoyed those blessings which were denied to him, in the retrospect of a well-spent life.

Sometimes she wandered in the environs of the castle, within the limits prescribed her, where her imagination had ample scope to revel in.

When brought here, the trees had lost their foliage, and every object around bore the cheerless aspect of winter. Now nature had resumed her charms, and vegetation was springing forth to life and vigour. Yet the idea that would sometimes strike upon Emilie's heart, for a moment embittered her pleasure; that all around seemed liberty, whilst she was alone shackled.

"Why is it thus," she would exclaim, "and, why does man pervert the designs of the Father of the Universe. How is it mankind thus torment each other, and then complain of the world's miseries?

"In nature all seems free; the power of a merciful Being is alone manifest, but his creatures, the creatures of an hour, preserved by his bounty, heap injuries on each other by injustice and tyranny."

In these moments, sad and dispirited, Emilie would retire to her apartments in the castle, where she had her books, those best companions in solitude, her drawing implements, and a musical instrument, which she found there.

She was surprised one evening during one of her rambles through the castle, on entering a dressing room where she had not before been, to find several pieces of work scattered on the floor, a child's robe, and some other things that seemed dropping to pieces from the damp.

On examining the robe, she saw that it was richly worked, chiefly with lace, and must from it's appearance have belonged to some person of superior rank.

A cloak too thrown across a couch at the further end of the room, attracted her attention, composed of fine materials, though very antique in the form. As Emilie laid it down on the couch from whence she had taken it, the singularity of this circumstance awakening curiosity in her mind, a paper, which seemed to have been concealed within the folds of the cloak, dropped on the floor.

She unfolded it, and found some lines written in a very beautiful female hand; they were nearly in parts defaced and unconnected, but what she could read was, "I shall hear that voice no more which soothed me to rest." "Yes, he is gone, and I am forgotten." ..... here there was a long break in the lines, "My life draws to a close, my weary pilgrimage is near it's end."

"In the morning of my days the sun of happiness shed it's rays upon me; dark clouds have since obscured the prospect."

"The cheering influence of love has withdrawn it's beams, I am left to mourn in desolation."

"Weary, faint, and heart-broken, my days are without hope."

"My child, the comfort of thy mother once, what will be thy fate?"

"Wilt thou too be deserted and forsaken. Would that, for thy sake, I could yet endure my miseries?"

"But the cord is broken, the spell is dissolved, the dream of life is over, and I must leave thee."

Here the writing ceased, and Emilie, as she placed the fragment on the couch, felt a sudden faintness come over her. Who could have been the author of these lines? it was evident that they were written under impressions the most wretched, and the sentiments she thought seemed to have proceeded from a heart of feeling, bowed down by the weight of unmerited injury.

"Poor victim of man's baseness,"

exclaimed Emilie, "thou art now at rest, but there is yet one who sorrows over thy suffering."

She again took up the cloak, and felt an awful sensation, when she reflected that it had probably been laid there by the writer of those lines, and perhaps might have been worn by her at the very time when she had thus breathed forth her lament. But what were the sensations of Emilie, when the mysterious warning which had been presented to her in the avenue of the villa, darted across her mind.

This unhappy female might, then, be the wife of the Marchese, to whom the stranger had so mysteriously alluded! She shuddered at the thought, and on rising from the couch to quit the apartment, felt herself unable to move; her limbs refused to aid her, and she sunk back. Something, however, to which a black ribbon was attached, caught her eye as it laid on the floor, enveloped in the muslin which was thrown there.

Emilie stooped for it, and found that she grasped in her hand a small case, which seemed to contain a locket or picture.

She hesitated, yet knew not why, as if for resolution to open it, and unclosing by degrees the case, she perceived the picture of a gentleman, set in brilliants.

There was something in the contour of the face which certainly resembled that of the Marchese Chiaramonti. Yet it's expression was much finer, more dignified, and more benevolent; a smile too played around the mouth, and seemed to light upon the countenance, giving it sweetness and animation, which Emilie had never seen in that of the Marchese. And there was yet another face, familiar to her, but whose she could not recollect, to which she thought this picture bore a much stronger likeness.

In turning to examine the back of it, imagining she should find some chypher, by

which it might be possible to conjecture for whom it had been taken, the sweet and pensive countenance of a female, in the bloom of youth and beauty, met her eye: none so lovely had she ever yet beheld, though here there was an expression with which she felt herself familiar. The eyes were long in their sluices and of a clear azure, the hair of an auburn shade, and the complexion brilliantly transparent. Yet something of sorrow had entered into the face, which did not seem it's characteristic.

The eyes were rather esst down than looking forward; and Emilie imagined that it had been painted at the moment of separation from an object very dear.

Here then, was new field for conjecture, Emilie gazed at these pictures by turns, and her tears dropt on that of the lady, when she recollected that it might be the same whose lamentations had before so much interested her; but who could be sufficiently inhuman to

have implanted misery there? So mild, so gentle, the countenance seemed to correspond with the mind; yet what wretchedness must that mind have endured, when pouring forth the bitterness of it's grief.

Could the gentleman too, whose picture had so much struck Emilie, be the same as him of whom she complained, who had forsaken and deceived her? No bad passions could inhabit there, it must then have been the miniature of some friend, perhaps a brother. But what had since become of her; what was now her fate; had the friendly hand of death relieved her from those sufferings, or was she still groaning beneath their yoke. "The Marchese has a wife in existence," seemed again to sound upon Emilie's ear.

The current ran chill within her veins. "Perhaps," said she, "I am like that poor victim, brought here to suffer and to weep; but I will never lose sight

of the caution I have received; I will be firm, and resist." She arose, and carefully closing the door, returned to her own apartment.

When the servant attended at supper, Emilie felt a strong inclination to make some enquiries respecting that part of the castle, and whether it was long since it had been inhabited; but she checked herself, on recollecting that he was in all probability ignorant on the subject, and that her curiosity might give rise to unpleasant conjecture.

The room it was evident had never been visited by any of the family, since every thing about wore the appearance of desertion, which was further confirmed by the cloak and pictures remaining in the same state.

Long, however, did this incident dwell on Emilie's mind. She was daily dreading the return of the Marchese to the castle, and had no hope, except that of

wearing out his patience by the firmness of her resistance.

The idea of escape she never indulged, her efforts, alone and unfriended, would have been insufficient, and she determined to wait with calmness the issue.

Her days, however, were comfortless, and the evenings, totally debarred society as she now was, were tediously passed: even the conversation of poor old Agnes in her lonely situation would have been an acquisition. As Emilie sat listening to the wind, whilst in hollow murmurs it whistled through the walls of the castle, which re-echoed with its sound, the tear would steal down her cheek, and the sigh burst from her heart.

Of Valdesa far away she sometimes thought in those moments of bitterness; "Yet he is ignorant of my fate," said she, "mine is single misery; let that comfort and console me."

The remembrance of the Chevalier

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frequently presented itself. She felt particularly interested in his fate, and anxious to learn what had befallen him.

He had left the villa without bidding her farewell, and conscious how much her affection had been suspected, she had forebore making any enquiries respecting him.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Honour's a sacred tie, the law of kings,
  The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,
That aids and strengthens virtue when it meets her,
  And imitates her actions where she is not.
It ought not to be sported with.—

CATO.

ON the evening in which Valdesa had quitted Jessica, to join a party at the English hotel, he stept into a room there until the company were assembled, to which strangers frequently resorted, in order to read the papers and converse on the topics of the day. As Valdesa seated himself by the fire, he observed an Englishman, as he conceived him to be from the fluency with

which he spoke that language, address himself to gentleman who had just entered. He was delivering his opinion with much freedom of different countries, and the manners and customs of the people in those respective nations through which he had travelled. Valdesa, who was in general reserved in his deportment, and not accustomed to deliver his sentiments very openly in the presence of strangers, read on without seeming to attend to the conversation.

" There is no country like England after all," said the stranger, " it is the only place for a man to live in, and I am heartily rejoiced that I'm now on my road back to it.

" In Spain, Italy, and in France, those damned papists pop upon you at every corner, and you are either afraid of being shut up in the Inquisition, assassinated in the dark, or locked in the Bastile.

" No, no, England's the only place for a man to speak his sentiments with-

out fear." Valdesa now raised his eyes from the paper, and fixed them on the stranger; and, with a contemptuous smile, replied, "you do not, I imagine, weigh very seriously the remarks you have made on the countries through which you have travelled, or they are very unguarded, for you impart your sentiments just as freely as if you were surrounded by Englishmen, and have nothing, I think, to complain of on the score of toleration at present."

"Sir," said the stranger, "I make a point of uttering my opinions without regard to those of the company, that is a privilege which every man should be allowed; and I again affirm, that if popery was destroyed, this and the neighbouring nations would be freed from half the miseries they groan under, with their damned convents, which is only another term for prison, where the poor wretches groan away their lives without one enjoyment of a rational being."

"You forget, I suppose, Sir," said Valdesa, "that the individuals with whom you are now conversing are parts of that body of people, and members of that faith against which you so vehemently declaim;" and, raising his voice in anger, "I advise you Sir, to be more guarded in uttering your sentiments, when they happen, as in the present instance, to be obnoxious to the company, and reserve them till you arrive on English ground, where they may be more relished." "I shall speak my opinions, Sir," said the stranger, "how, where, and in what manner I please, without consulting you or any other person. Who are you, Sir, that you presume to dictate to me on this occasion? but I need not enquire what you are, since you have confessed yourself a member of that valuable community." "I am," said Valdesa, rising from his seat, and advancing towards the stranger, "too much a gentleman to descend to further

altercation with you. Our conversation of this evening must be concluded in a very different manner. My name is Valdesa, son of the Conte Valdesa; your's I have no ambition to be acquainted with. You may expect to hear further from me in the morning." And leaving the room, Valdesa requested Monsieur Delaborde to wait upon the stranger the following morning with a challenge; the challenge was accepted, as the stranger refused to apologize, and with the sequel the reader has been already made acquainted. The father of Monsieur Delaborde was one of the officers of police, and a man of some consequence in Montpelier; by his son the place of Valdesa's abode had been concealed, he would nevertheless have been put under arrest, but for the circumstance of the stranger's requesting that he might not be injured.

Delaborde, who was fully acquainted

with the strictness of their laws, was however extremely anxious that Valdesa should leave Montpelier, and on that account had magnified the danger of the stranger's situation.

CHAPTER XXXV.

——— one to whom
Long patience has such mild composure giv'n,
That patience now doth seem a thing of which
He hath no need.

WORDSWORTH.

MONSIEUR Delaborde had now returned to Montpelier, and sent to Jessica for permission to wait upon her; the following morning he paid her a visit. "I am charged," said he, on rising to take leave "with my sister's respects, and that she would feel herself very happy in the honour of waiting upon you, which she has thus long been with-held from doing, by the fear of intruding, supposing that society under

late circumstances might not be pleasant."

"I shall feel much gratified indeed," said Jessica, "in having an opportunity of paying my personal respects to your sister, and expressing to her my grateful sense of the kindness and humanity of her brother." Delaborde now took leave, and Jessica, anxious to divert her mind from dwelling too intently on its cares, prepared to take a walk, during which she met the same gentleman, whose appearance had before so much attracted herself and Valdesa.

He was in close conversation with a woman meanly apparelled, who seemed as if she was recovering from illness, for she walked feebly; her form was shrunk, and her face emaciated; desirous of discovering whether she was in distress, Jessica walked quick to overtake her, and saw the gentleman put a purse into her hand; she did not however stop, but turned down one of the

narrow streets, where Jessica lost sight of her.

He walked on, and she observed him take a small book from his pocket as he leaned on a low wall, his arms folded, and apparently lost in reflection.

After Jessica had passed however she involuntarily turned round, and the stranger was then regarding her with earnest and enquiring looks. Jessica returned to her lodgings, where this little incident dwelt on her mind, and she felt very anxious to know who this gentleman was that had so much interested her.

The next day Madamoiselle Delaborde called upon her, Jessica found her very handsome, with a great deal of French vivacity; after sitting for an hour or two, and requesting that she might be favoured with as much of Jessica's company as she could spare her, "for my own part," Madamoiselle added, "I think it would only be sisterly and pru-

dent for me to write to the Signor, for my poor brother has never acted like a rational being since he had first the honour of seeing you .

" Poor Louis was never remarkable for brilliancy of parts, and now his head seems entirely bewildered.

" I assure you if you go on making such rapid incursions into the hearts of my countrymen, I shall have a petition drawn up, which will, I have no doubt, have numerous signatures annexed to it, praying for your immediate removal from hence."

" My obligations to your brother," said Jessica, smiling, " are such as I can never repay, and shall certainly never forget."

" Oh! say no more, I beseech you," interrupted Madamoiselle, " you have already said what will make Louis happy for the rest of his life, and I will try to repeat it verbatim ; let me recollect ; " can never repay, shall never for-

get." "What will become of my poor Louis when he hears that? But I have hit upon a wise expedient; I shan't tell him all at once, only one sentence at a time, for I should be afraid of the consequences; I dare say it's the first civil thing that ever was said of him." "That I cannot agree with you in believing," said Jessica, "for if I may judge from the little I have seen of Monsieur Delaborde, I should suppose that he has so often been employed in the services of humanity, that he must frequently have heard the language of gratitude, before I had the pleasure of his acquaintance."

"Well, this I cannot bear," said Madamoiselle, rising to be gone. "My memory won't carry it, and it might have fatal effects; indeed I have now forgot to deliver a message from my father, to say that nothing but a very severe cold which he has lately been suffering from,

could have prevented his waiting on you ere now."

"May I then say that you will wave that etiquette, and come to spend the day with us to-morrow, though I must request of you to leave some of your attractions on the road, as I really am not desirous that my father, who has hitherto, I believe, lived as prudently and peaceably as his neighbours, should turn fool in his old age; and if the mania spreads so rapidly through the family of Delabordes, I know not where it may end."

"I feel very grateful," replied Jessica, "for your kind invitation, and if you are not intending to have any party, I will do myself the honour of waiting upon you."

"Oh, don't fear that," said Madamoiselle, "I dare say you will find my father wrapped up in flannel, Louis attempting to spell the newspaper to him, and your humble servant I cannot say

what, for her employments are so versatile that, except that of tormenting, she seldom adheres to any one for many minutes together."

Madamoiselle now took her departure, after receiving Jessica's promise of being at Monsieur Delaborde's at an early hour.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

When in pray'r the broken heart
  Asks a blessing from above ;
Heav'n shall take the wanderer's part,
  And reward the stranger's love.

MONTGOMERY.

THE next day, according to her promise, Jessica paid her visit ; when she arrived at the house, she was ushered into a very elegant apartment, where in a short time Madamoiselle joined her.

" My father," said she, " is in his library, will you allow me to introduce him to you there, or wait till he joins you." " I am anxious," said Jessica, " to pay my respects to Monsieur De-

laborde, and will, if you please, accompany you to him." On Jessica's entering the room, Monsieur arose, and coming to the door, affectionately saluted her, assuring her that she had conferred a favour upon him by this visit, and bidding her a cordial welcome to his house. Monsieur Delaborde was between fifty and sixty; gentlemanly in his appearance, with a very benevolent countenance; he had had the misfortune of losing an amiable wife, and this circumstance had tempered his mind with somewhat of sorrow, which did not appear its natural inmate.

He was universally respected, and supported his character, as merchant in Montpelier, with credit and integrity; his mind did not wholly confine itself within the limits of commercial pursuits; he read a great deal, and possessed general information, and thus had added the refinement of literature to an

extensive knowledge of mercantile concerns; this circumstance rendered him a very valuable companion, whilst his virtues made him an excellent friend.

"Where," said he, turning to his daughter, "is Louis, my dear? I think he ought to have been at home before now, particularly when he knew that the Signora was expected.

"I assure you," he added, addressing himself to Jessica, "I have heard much of you from that quarter, before I had the honour of knowing you personally. Louis had made me acquainted with your character, and I need not add that his account rendered me very anxious for the promised introduction."

At this moment Delaborde entered the room, and after respectfully saluting Jessica, apologized for being absent on her arrival, "for as I claim the happiness of a first acquaintance with you," continued he, "I certainly should have been here to have presented my father."

"My introduction to you," said Jessica, "took place under very unhappy auspices, when I did not indeed imagine that so much comfort as I now enjoy was in reserve for me."

"You have not of course," said Monsieur Delaborde, "yet heard from the Signor?" "No," she replied, "I have not, but under the present favourable circumstances, am anticipating with joyful sensations his return to me."

"That he must be anxious to return to you, I have no doubt," answered Monsieur, "and I think it must have required more than common fortitude to leave you."

"There," said Madamoiselle, interrupting him, "that is just what I expected," and turning to Jessica, "you see how my prophesy is fulfilled, how wonderfully does the contagion spread! even our poor domestics by and bye will, I expect, be infected with the disease; nay, I should not be at all surprised if

my little dog Fanchon was to take it, and that I assure you I should not forgive; and, miraculous as such a disorder may appear, you must not marvel if you hear that we are all dead of the "Valdesa fever." Monsieur laughed at this flight of his daughter.

"When you are more accustomed to Adellè," said he, "you will frequently be amused at the expence of her father and brother; I assure you she is no respecter of persons, but, on the true levelling principle, treats all her friends in the same manner."

"Now that," said Madamoiselle, "is what in trade would be called forestalling, is not that the term Louis? or in conversation anticipating; both of which are equally ungenerous. My character should be left to unfold itself by degrees, that the Signora might form her own opinion; now so different am I," continued she, turning to Jessica, "from what they describe, that not long

ago a disciple of Lavater's, for whom, by the bye, I have a profound respect and veneration, assured me that there was in my countenance a great deal of the milk of human kindness, and a considerable tincture of melancholy in my composition, and I placed implicit faith in his judgment, believing it to be unerring from one circumstance alone; Louis happened to be in company at the time, and pray, I said, taking the person into a part of the room where I knew he could not hear the decision, for having a fearful pre-sentiment of what it would be, I was unwilling to shock the feelings of my poor brother, "Pray," said I, "what do you conceive the character of that young man to be, who is listening to an old woman's story by the fire?" He looked earnestly, and pronounced it to be very very harmless, much engrossed by trifles, and stupid to an unfortunate degree.

"I honoured the man so much for

his discernment, that I informed him the gentleman was my brother, assuring him that his decision so much proved the superiority of his penetration, that my father and myself should be happy to see him at all times."

Before Delaborde could reply to this attack, dinner was announced, after which coffee, according to the French custom, was soon introduced, and Madamoiselle, rising from the table, said, "now as we are a party en famille, and the gentlemen do not, I suppose, expect us to withdraw, you shall, if you are musical, addressing herself to Jessica, hear some French songs, and in return for my badinage of this morning, I will give Louis an opportunity of displaying the solitary talent with which nature has endowed him.

"We are so fortunate as to have an English harpsichord, which are here very uncommon, and if you will step

into the music room, my father and brother will accompany us."

"I do not know," said Delaborde, "what amusement the Signora will collect from my performance, to recompence her for the honour she does me, in listening to it, though she must now have so very mean an opinion of my abilities, that her expectations of this specimen may prove favourable to me."

"Come," said Madamoiselle, "I believe the physiognomist might have added a just sense of your demerits to the other traits of your character, and have still preserved the line of truth."

"But perhaps," said Delaborde, interrupting her, "the Signora plays herself, and that would be indeed a treat." "Well then," said Madamoiselle, "that shall be reserved for you when we have heard your performance; the Signora will then perhaps be prevailed on to favour us."

"I have never," said Jessica, "touched an instrument, since the death of Mr. Hanbury, and I do not think I can now play at all." Delaborde however entreated that she would make the attempt, and seemed astonished at the execution with which Jessica performed some very difficult pieces of English and Italian music; she turned to that beautiful canzonet of the celebrated Hayden, "Sympathy," which was admirably adapted to her sweet and plaintive voice; when she came to that part,

> "When thou art griev'd, I grieve no less,
> My joys by thine are known;
> And ev'ry good thou would'st possess,
> Becomes in wish my own."

she thought of Valdesa, her voice faltered, and, anxious to relieve her embarrassment, Delaborde now offered to take his place at the instrument, and accompanied the songs, which were

chiefly of his own composing, in a voice most wonderfully powerful and melodious.

Jessica next called upon Madamoiselle, she could not however be prevailed on to play. "I never," said she, "attempt any music, but cotillions and waltzes, for I can't bear to be foil'd with my own weapons, and those are the only compositions which Louis never plays, and in that department of science I must, though unwillingly, acknowledge his superiority; I write songs occasionally, when labouring under those fits of melancholy which the physiognomist described."

"Then your compositions must be valuable, from their scarcity alone," said Jessica, "for I should not imagine that you often experienced that feeling."

"Ah," she answered, shaking her head, "there is more in this than meets the ear."

The party now removed to the draw-

ing room, and Jessica explained to Delaborde the cause of her extreme unhappiness on the information he had given her respecting the supposed name of the wounded stranger.

"You knew not," added she, "when you gave me the address on the card found in the pocket of my husband's antagonist, that it was the same as that of a brother, from whom I have been long separated. You may conceive, but I cannot describe, the agony of my feelings, and it was not until my husband had quitted Montpelier, that I was happily undeceived in the terrible conjectures which I had harboured.

"An old and faithful servant of Mr. Hanbury's, who now lives in our service, then went to the lodgings of the gentleman, to make the requisite enquiries, and, to my unspeakable joy, found that he was an entire stranger."

Jessica then repeated to them the

scene which had passed between Philip and the girl at the lodgings.

" Indeed, my dear Madam," said Monsieur Delaborde, " your sufferings have been very great.

" When Louis mentioned to me your excessive unhappiness, I supposed that it arose solely from the situation of the Signor; we knew not the aggravating circumstances which attended your's."

" Now that old man," said Madamoiselle, " your servant Philip, is a person for whose acquaintance I feel particularly ambitious.

" Cannot you, Louis, obtain me an introduction to him? for his way of doing things seems so much like my own, that I've an idea we should be very fond of each other; but perhaps, upon second thoughts, it is better not, for should I happen to be as much fascinated with her servant as you and my father already are with the Signora, there would not be one rational being in the family:

and as all the understanding of the Delaborde's has long been centered in one of its members, it would be a complete overthrow indeed."

Monsieur Delaborde proposed a game at picquet, which he was particularly fond of, and Jessica sat down to play with him, till her servant was announced, when Delaborde prepared to attend her to her lodgings.

Monsieur requested that she would consider his house her home, and favour his daughter with her company as often as she could.

"We only touch at happiness before we are deprived of it," added he, and affectionately taking Jessica by the hand, "I suppose as soon as we are all well acquainted we shall be obliged to part."

Much soothed by her visit, Jessica returned to her lodgings, to which Delaborde accompanied her.

As they walked along, he talked of

Valdesa, of his father and sister. After expressing her admiration of Monsieur, Jessica remarked on the extreme vivacity and animation of Madamoiselle.

" Yes," replied Delaborde, " but Adellé has not, I assure you, escaped without her full share of sorrow.

" She was attached, deeply attached, and for a long period engaged to a gentleman, though I can scarcely call him so, since I conceive he has forfeited his pretensions to that title, who resides not in this place, but in the same province with us.

" Without assigning any one motive for his conduct, he dissolved the connection, and drew upon himself the odium of all who love my sister.

" Some undue influence, however, it has always been supposed, had been used to prejudice his mind.

" 'Tis a long period since this unfortunate affair, and Adellé has recovered, in some degree, those spirits natural to

her. There are moments though, notwithstanding her apparent volatility, in which I am sorry to say she still feels deeply.

" She will never I believe marry, nor indeed do we wish her to do so; we are too well convinced that she would not imagine herself happy in an union with any other than the object of her first attachment, and the idea of her marrying him would render me, at least, very miserable."

" I am sorry," replied Jessica, " to hear this account, for Madamoiselle appears extremely amiable, and I had hoped very happy. Time however may, and I should hope will, completely restore her mind, and she will yet, I doubt not, meet with some one in whom she can securely confide; for your sister does not, if I may pronounce judgment on so short an acquaintance, seem fitted to live solitary and unattached."

They had by this time arrived at Jes-

sica's lodgings, where Delaborde took his leave.

Jessica was now looking forward to a letter from Valdesa with much anxiety; he had promised to write to her immediately on his arrival in England, and she only waited to receive that intelligence, in order to impart to him the convalescent state of his antagonist's health, and her wishes for his return.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

I could not bear
To leave thee in the neighbourhood of death,
But flew in all the haste of love to find thee.

ADDISON.

WE now return to the Castle of Archelino, where we parted with Emilie, under those unhappy circumstances which yet detained her a prisoner there. The Marchese still remaining determined in his resolution, the Conte inflexible in his tyranny.

Emilie adhered to her intention of never uniting herself to the Marchese.

He had once visited the castle since the period at which she had been brought there, and finding her fixed in her resolution, left it in the hope of her being induced by time, and the solitariness of her situation, to change her mode of thinking; neither time or circumstance however produced that effect.

The dreadful warning sounded in her ear, and she was resolved to suffer perpetual imprisonment, or death itself, rather than submit to that union.

Emilie often visited those apartments which she explored on her first residing there, and each time with added wonder. The pictures she had secured, and those were the objects of her frequent contemplation; something darkly mysterious seemed to hang over the circumstances connected with them, for Emilie could not doubt, that that of the lady was the same, whose lamentations she had read, and little doubt rested on her mind that she was the unfortunate

wife of the Marchese, to whom the warning had alluded.

One night, on returning from a lonely walk within the precincts of the castle, after a gloomy comfortless day, she seated herself on the edge of a low wall, which was falling to ruins, and was meditating on her forlorn, deserted situation, when a figure approached her with which she felt herself struck, as having before seen.

There was a graceful lightness in the air and manner of walking, something resembling the Chevalier, but Emilie knew it could not be he who was in the neighbourhood of the cassle, and concluded that it was some stranger who had lately arrived, as she never recollected in all her walks having met any person except the domestics.

The dress did not resemble that which the Chevalier used to wear, and the form seemed thinner, yet there was certainly

a similarity in the general appearance to his.

As he approached nearer however, Emilie discovered that it was indeed the Chevalier.

The sight of any one from whom she had ever received the least mark of kindness, would have been pleasant to her, in her now desolate situation; and certainly that pleasure was heightened, on finding that the stranger was he in whose society she had passed so many hours, in which she had experienced the only comfort that had ever been allowed to her since the departure of her brother.

The Chevalier took the hand of Emilie, and assured her how much he was overjoyed on seeing her; his looks indeed bore testimony to the truth of his professions.

She felt so astonished on beholding him thus unexpectedly, that she was some time in returning his salutation.

"I am indeed so surprised," said Emilie, "at this wholly unlooked-for meeting, that I can scarcely give credit to my senses. How came you here? and how long have you resided in this neighbourhood?" "That," he said, "must be the subject of our future conversation, if you will indeed permit me the honor of seeing you again, for the present I must make those enquiries of you in which I am so much interested.

"How is your health, I fear it may have suffered from your long confinement, and your looks too fully confirm my fears?" Emilie assured him however, that, "she had been tolerably well when the unhappy circumstances in which she was placed were considered.

"For I see no end," said she, "of my miseries; each day passes over without bringing me one ray of comfort, and there is no hope of termination

to my sufferings; I was a prisoner indeed, before they brought me hither, but then no dreadful alternative awaited me to banishment from society: I looked forward, and that only for a short period; cheered, by the hope of my brother's return, and believing that my release from captivity would be the certain consequence of his efforts i my favour, I enjoyed by anticipation, the happiness which would attend my restoration to society. But here the termination of my present enthralment presents only the prospect of a slavery, infinitely more dreadful in an union, more to be feared than death."

Emilie proceeded to acquaint the Chevalier with the mysterious warning which she had received in the avenue of the castle. "It is a circumstance with which I am wholly unacquainted," he replied, though it is yet very possible that it may exist, "I know so much of the Marchese's character, as to

feel little or no surprise on this information, and my residence abroad for a period of eight years leaves me in total ignorance of the events which took place during my absence."

"I fear," said Emilie, "that our continuing to converse longer on this subject, situated as I am at present, may lead to unpleasant conjecture."

"When," said the Chevalier then, "will you allow me the honour of seeing you again?" Emilie paused. Their meeting was a mode of communication which she did not approve, but, under existing circumstances, it was the only method she could adopt.

Emilie at length promised that she would see the Chevalier the next morning, and the hour of twelve was fixed for their appointment.

She returned to the castle, her heart somewhat cheered by this transient interview. "I am not then," said she, "so destitute as I imagined myself to

be; there is one who, in the absence of my brother, my best friend and protector, still sympathizes in my misfortunes. Amiable Chevalier, may the solicitude you have shewn for me never involve you in distress."

Emilie sat down and endeavoured to compose her mind by reading, which was now suffering as much from pleasurable as it had before endured from painful sensations.

Books she always found her best companions, and indeed for a long time they had been her only resource. She had early acquired a taste for reading, and was well acquainted with some of the best English authors, a language which she particularly admired. The wild genius of Shakespear, the sublime descriptions of Milton, and the energetic powers of Johnson, by turns occupied her imagination, and rendered her forgetful of real suffering, by lead-

ing her insensibly into regions of fancied bliss.

Emilie had not entirely escaped a tendency to the indulgence of romantic notions; her views of mankind were far different from those which persons form who mingle with the world.

Books are not in that respect the test of truth; immured in solitude, and confined to those, she had drawn for her own contemplation an ideal picture; and believed all her fellow-creatures equally amiable and virtuous as herself. In the Marchese indeed Emilie beheld a striking instance to the contrary, but she hoped and felt almost assured, that his was not a common character; she knew not how many selfish, barbarous passions, she should find amongst the beings who inhabit that world of which she so frequently thought.

How many of the virtuous perish in indigent obscurity, and pine away their

lives in hopeless regret, whilst the author of those sufferings, base and despicable, is revelling in all the pomp of pride and luxury.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

I know he looks on me but as a wretch,
Beset with ills, and cover'd with misfortunes;
But by the Gods I swear millions of worlds
Should never buy me to be like that Cæsar.

ADDISON.

EMILIE prepared the following morning for her interview with the Chevalier, whom she found waiting for her, and after enquiring how she felt herself, he proceeded to give her some account of his wanderings.

"After I quitted you," said he, "at the chateau, quitted you so abruptly, and without the opportunity of even bidding you adieu, for the Marchese either was or appeared so impatient to be gone, that that pleasure was denied to me, we returned to one of his seats.

"The restraint which I had long suffered in the presence of the Marchese, and my wish of escaping his society, had long rendered me particularly anxious to return to my own province; but I had indulged a hope that my longer residence with him might be favourable to you, and, under that consideration, my remaining under his roof was no sacrifice.

"On our return, however, I found the Marchese unusually gloomy and reserved; he spoke little, and in the sullen tone of suppressed rage.

"I felt little disposed to conversation, and the journey was pursued in mutual silence.

"On our arrival we separated, he walked out to inspect some alterations which were taking place in the grounds, and I retired to my own room.

"The servant soon after came up to inform me that supper was on the table, and I again joined the Marchese; he spoke

seldom, but I observed he called for wine more frequently than usual, and after the servants had withdrawn seemed anxious to address me, but hesitated, as if he wanted resolution.

" He rose from his seat, and walked several times across the apartment, and I took a book from my pocket which I was anxious to finish. " I think," said the Marchese, at length breaking the silence, " that is not very civil ; I find the army is not always the school of politeness. There is an English author to whom, as you are acquainted with that language, it might not be improper to introduce you, Chesterfield, I believe, is the name." " The same," said I, " you are perfectly right, but if I recollect his character, or am able to appreciate it, it was not one that I should chuse for a model. No, rather than resemble that man, I would be like the natives of the woods; for, darting my eye towards Marchese, he was an insincere man, and that is a

character which I must always detest. He blushed, his lip quivered with rage, but the allusion, of which he was conscious, he durst not resent" "Do you then," said he, "invariably follow those maxims of sincerity, which I suppose you prize from your detestation of the want of it?" "I always adhere to them when in my power," I replied, "and as a proof of it, I was informed on one of my visits at the Conte Valdesa's, that you were addressing the Signora; I sought an interview with her, and candidly informed her, that I did not conceive an union with you would render her happy." "And on what authority, Sir," said he, raising his voice in rage, "did you dare to utter such a sentiment?" "On that of my own observation," I coolly replied, "you know what that has afforded me, and, rising from my seat, I am grateful I said, for your care of me in my infant years; since then, thrown upon the world, and

left to cope with the hardships of my situation, unknown and unfriended, I have had many opportunities of reflection; this has taught me, that though gratitude is in itself a valuable quality, it ought not to supersede those feelings which are due to justice.

" I saw the Signora, and I saw her amiable and virtuous, I could not help feeling a conviction that she merited a happier fate; I have preserved that sincerity of which I proudly boast, by making you privy to this circumstance. I am returning to Switzerland, to my own province, and I may never see you more; the compact is broken, and henceforth I suppose you will choose that I should be a stranger to you. Suffer me, then, before we part to give you my counsel, young as I am, and incompetent as I may be to the task; painful observation has convinced me that virtue is the only possession which promises stability, all else is fleeting and uncertain, it is

that alone which befriends us in sickness, in adversity, and at the hour of death.

"Daily sacrificed as it is to the enjoyments of an hour, made to yield to the stubborn wills and depraved inclinations of man, yet it will retain it's brilliancy when those shall have perished. Embrace it then, and may you know that happiness which, divested of it, you never can experience.

"I quitted the room, and the next morning left his house. Prior however to my departure, a Swiss valet of the Marchese's, whose family resides in the canton of Zurich, came into my room where I was dressing;

"And I enquired of him if he had any commands to his friends."

"I wish," said he, "that I had to attend your honour there, for I long to see them all again, and I can't say that I'm very fond of my present situation. I've seen so many changes since I came

here; and there's my master's secretary, he knows a great deal more than I do.

"He called me into his room the other day when he was writing. No, now I recollect, it's many days since, and he enquired of me if my master was not going to marry the Conte's daughter; I said there was such a report, but I couldn't say for the truth of it; but that, as he was going to the Conte's on business, perhaps he would know then." "Well," he said, God forbid it should be the case." "Now the secretary you know, Sir, is a very sensible man, and has travelled a good deal with the Marchese, and knows all his private affairs, and this seemed rather odd to me; however he went to the Conte's a day or two after, and I suppose he there heard that every thing was settled; but he said he hoped it would never be, and I could not help fancying that he had fallen in love with the Signora himself."

It now darted on Emilie's mind that

the information which she had received had proceeded from this person to whom the valet alluded, and she mentioned her suspicions to the Chevalier, who seemed to think it probable that it might be so. Unwilling, however, to interrupt his narrative, Emilie forebore to comment upon it.

"I left the Marchese's," continued the Chevalier, "and pursued my route into Switzerland; after my arrival there, from the fatigue of my journey, which was taken a great part of the way on foot, I was extremely ill; that illness was, however, greatly aggravated from my solicitude on your account. I had no oppor- of hearing from you, and I much feared that, wearied with persecution, you would be prevailed on to give your hand to the Marchese.

"After a suspence of some months, I determined to return to the neighbourhood of Naples, and endeavour to gain some intelligence of you.

" When I arrived, I found all apparently deserted, and your place of abode uninhabited.

" I was under the necessity of being guarded in my enquiries, from a fear that the Conte might be informed of my return. Racked by suspence, and not knowing where to apply for information, I was one evening wandering near your house, indulging recollections which fondly clung to my heart, when I saw at a distance, crossing the grounds, your old housekeeper, and to her I determined to apply for tidings of you.

" I found on coming near her that she had not forgotten me." " I am glad," said she, " to see your honour, it's many a day since your were at the Conte's, and I was afraid I should never have seen you again."

" I instantly made enquiries after you, and what were my sensations on being informed that you were no more. I gathered from Agnes, however, that

she had no certain knowledge of the event, only that it had been rumoured, and it struck me, from the air of mystery that appeared in the old woman's story, that you had been conveyed to one of the Marchese's seats.

" I was resolved to visit them all, in the hope of discovering your residence, and the castle of Archelino, as being the most distant and of course the most probable place of confinement, I fixed upon as that of my first research.

" I have been in the vicinity of it for the last fortnight, each day hoping that some fortunate chance might favour me with a sight of you.

" That happy event has at length taken place, and now tell me what I can do so serve you.

" Your resolution of never uniting yourself to the Marchese circumstances must have confirmed."

" Oh, yes," said Emilie, " on that head am resolved; previous to the warning

which I received, an union with him would have involved me in misery, it would now render me criminal, and death would be infinitely preferable to the horrors of such a situation."

Emilie informed the Chevalier of her visit to the apartment, where she had discovered the picture and the written fragment, and that the latter she could not doubt to have been the production of the Marchese's unfortunate wife.

He seemed much astonished with the circumstance, but could offer no clue to assist her conjectures.

She now shewed him the pictures, and mentioned the resemblance which she fancied that of the gentleman bore to the Marchese Chiaramonti.

As the Chevalier was contemplating in silence the countenance of the lady, Emilie was struck with the similarity of expression, which she had before remarked, and now found that it was the the Chevalier himself whom it so much resembled.

She did not, however, notice to him the resemblance.

She was now under the necessity of returning to the castle, her longer absence from which she feared might excite suspicion.

The Marchese, she had no doubt, had spies amongst the domestics, who were employed in watching her movements, and the most distant apprehensions of the meeting on their part, Emilie knew would have very unpleasant consequences.

She promised, however, that she would meet the Chevalier on the same hour the following day, and returned to the castle. On their next interview, Emilie was to decide what measures to pursue.

To continue at the castle under a daily anticipation of the horrors that awaited her, she felt was a trial to which her fortitude was unequal; she revolved

various plans, but each was in turn rejected.

The friendly offers of assistance which Emilie had received from the Chevalier were a strong temptation to embrace some mode of escape, and yet, from this idea, desolate and comfortless as was her situation, the delicacy of her sentiments revolted.

Emilie had conceived an affection for the Chevalier, which was founded on a belief of his virtues; he had already hazarded as much of his own comfort and safety as the most passionate lover could have done, impelled by the hope of self gratification.

Emilie could not but admit that the conduct of the Chevalier had been truly disinterested, and his general sentiments were highly congenial to her own; his open avowal to the Marchese of his declaration to herself, on the imposibility of happiness in the projected union, had raised him in Emilie's esteem, and proved the falsity of those epithets bestowed on

him by the Conte; for he had shewn himself, in that instance, neither a hypocrite or deceiver.

But yet he had never professed for Emilie any feeling but that of friendship; her situation was very critical, and placed her under most delicate circumstances. One night was alone given for her determination, and that night was passed in painful rumination.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

But there was none whose eye pursu'd
  This youth's unfollow'd footsteps home,
And he had steel'd his heart to bear
  Till the pulse, that should have quiver'd there,
Was feeling less and numb.

ANON.

VALDESA had parted from Jessica with sensations of a mingled kind, in which sorrow, fear, and affection were blended, though certainly the latter feeling predominated.

It has been already premised that a proneness to suspicion formed one trait in the character of Valdesa.

The few words which he had accidentally overheard, on ascending the stair case the night of his separation

from Jessica, had made an impression on his mind, which he could not shake off.

Whilst in her presence, and dwelling with respect and admiration on every sentence she uttered, this sentiment was so feeble as scarcely to have gained a momentary influence, yet now separated from Jessica, the feeling occurred with added force.

Valdesa's voyage to England, which under other circumstances would have afforded him pleasure, now only yielded painful prospects and deep regret.

Of the fate of his wounded antagonist he was anxious to be informed; passion had subsided, offended pride was avenged, and reason, when too late, regained it's seat.

On Valdesa's arrival in England, unknowing and unknown by all there, except the friends he had met with at Montpelier, he hastened to the capital: here every thing was new to him, and

his mind was diverted for a while from it's own cares, by the variety of objects which were presented to it. But week after week elapsed, and no letter from Jessica had yet reached him. Valdesa wrote to her, and enclosed the letter in one to Delaborde, requesting a gentleman, who had sailed in the same vessel with himself, and who was returning to Southampton, to deliver it into the hands of the captain, charging him to present it to young Delaborde immediately on his arrival.

Valdesa was never inclined to cultivate society, even in his own country, and less so now when thrown amongst strangers; he had no opportunity of investigating their character. "Friendship," would he often say, "is a plant of slow growth, and it requires a thorough knowledge of the foibles, as well as the virtues of our associates, to render it permanent, else disappointment gives place to disgust, and the mind is not

soothed, but irritated by this kind of intercourse." This was one of the prejudices under which Valdesa's mind was labouring, an axiom which, though it might be founded on truth, would not contribute to our general comfort; life is too short for this tardy method of proceeding in forming it's intimacies, and a long life would it indeed require, joined to the closest study of the human character, to make us thoroughly acquainted with all it's inconsistencies; we must take the good along with the bad, and rest happy if we find that the former predominates. Valdesa, however, felt his hours sometimes hang heavy, and being alone, his thoughts unamused, dwelt intently on the most cheerless and unpleasant circumstances.

He had excessive sensibility, but it was of that unfortunate kind which embraces the gloomy and disquieting, and rejects the bright and soothing in the objects presented to it.

Every instance which Valdesa had witnessed of the firm affection of his wife, on which he might have reflected with comfort, vanished from his thoughts, whilst those few words, bearing an equivocal construction, rested there, producing the bitterest sensations.

He wandered about the streets of London, and still attended the different places of amusement; but novelty had lost it's power to charm.

He called on Mr. Gurney, Jessica's friend, and found that he had left town, and was gone with his family into the North, where they were expected to remain for some months.

The period had arrived and passed in which he might have received letters from Jessica.

Sometimes Valdesa feared that his antagonist was no more, and imagined that she was with-held from addressing him on that account, and then the idea would again obtrude itself, that her

silence proceeded from abatement of affection, or attachment to another; and thus did he torment himself from day to day, by suspicions which jealousy had excited.

"I have shewn to Jessica," he would say, "all the affection in my power, of my sincerity she can have no doubts; I have written to her since my arrival, expressing my regret on being separated from her, my wishes for our reunion, yet she remains silent, though parted from a husband, sick, wounded, and in a foreign land. I will write to her then no more, no, she is no longer the same Jessica to whom I was so faithfully, so tenderly attached, in whom I thought all of human excellence was centered.

"Her virtues are confined to theory, her character fictitious. Where are her proofs of unalterable affection, unchanging esteem, when a few months have terminated both?"

With this kind of reasoning did Val-

desa harrass himself, until his affection for his wife was insensibly undermined, that affection, however, no other could possess; he had sufficient rectitude of principle to be proof against any other attractions, his regard for Jessica would have returned with all it's former force, had circumstances permitted his return to her; but they were separated of necessity, and these dangerous ideas were daily gaining ground.

One night when Valdesa was seated by the fire at the Crown and Anchor tavern, a young man entered the room, and drawing a chair to the fire, complained of excessive cold. He had just returned, he said, from abroad, and the difference of climate he felt had sensibly affected him. As Valdesa concluded he was addressing him, he turned to make some reply, but found that the stranger was conversing with a gentleman in another part of the room; the person, however, to whom he was speaking ap-

peared a stranger also, and only slightly replied to his observation; he then made some remarks to Valdesa, who now regarded him more attentively; his appearance was that of a worn-out man of fashion, whose health and finances were alike suffering from the effects of dissipation. There was something about him of the what has been.

His manners were polished, but there was a gloom in his countenance which seemed produced by some recent calamity, and compassion, or perhaps sympathy, induced Valdesa to enter into further conversation with him.

He found that this gentleman had lately returned from the West Indies.

"Though all countries," said he, "are alike to me, for I am heartily tired of the world, yet I confess I was glad to return to my own, after an absence of four years, and yet that is a strong proof of the power of local attachments, for there are none here who would care if I was hung up to-morrow."

Valdesa now found that the stranger was inclined to be communicative, and felt some degree of interest mingle with his curiosity respecting him.

This language seemed odd, to use in the presence of a person with whom he was wholly unacquainted, and Valdesa waited in silence the conclusion of the sentence. There was a dog laid by the fire, who had come in with the stranger, and to that he next addressed himself. "Poor Carlos," said he, "I envy thee." "That," said Valdesa, "is a sensation which I never yet felt towards one of the animal species."

"It is well for you, then," replied the stranger, "for it is a proof that you could always bear your own reflections."

It was a strangely singular comment, and Valdesa was at a loss whether to conclude that his senses were deranged; they continued, however, to converse on a variety of subjects, and his observations were extremely rational; but there

was strongly marked in his sentiments a mind labouring under the consciousness of some crimes or errors, which oppressed it with the feelings of remorse.

His health appeared in a declining state, for he had a hollow cough. The hectic glow of consumption too appeared on his face, and the exertion of speaking seemed to fatigue him.

Valdesa found he was a resident in the house, and they soon after this conversation separated. The incident however dwelt on Valdesa's mind, and he made enquiries at the tavern respecting the stranger, whose name and person were both he found unknown there.

CHAPTER XL.

Why stern remembrance must thine iron hand
Harrow my soul? Why calls thy cruel power
The joys that once were mine.

SOUTHEY.

JESSICA was now suffering all the painful anxiety attendant on the circumstance of never having heard from her husband since his departure; and had at length come to a resolution of waiting for a short time the arrival of a letter, and if at the expiration of that period no tidings reached her, she formed the intention of going over to England.

Jessica had already written to Valde-

sa twice, and directed her letters under cover to Mr. Gurney, at whose house, she supposed, he would call immediately on his arrival in London.

The Delabordes were unremitting in their attentions to Jessica, and Monsieur was very solicitous that she should take up her abode at his house during the remainder of Valdesa's absence.

The state of her finances she found began to diminish, but she was yet unwilling to lay herself under obligations, if those could possibly be avoided; and in her present situation, the more she excluded herself from society, the more proper she conceived it would be.

"No, I will not incur the reproaches of a husband," Jessica would say, "by any action which might cause them, or give him a moment's pain; though Valdesa neglects me, I will not add to the bitterness of that feeling the consciousness of deserving it."

Sometimes old Philip, on going into the room, would find her in tears, and his own trickled down his face whilst he enquired what he could do to serve her.

One morning as Jessica sat busied in painful reflection, the door was opened, and Madamoiselle Delaborde gaily entered the room, calling of Philip as she came through the passage, and when he made his appearance, without taking any notice of the Signora,

" Philip," she said, " you must exert your energies in preparing for your immediate departure. I have got an order from the police to convey the Signora and yourself to our country house, where you are to undergo strict penance for some time to come."

Whilst Philip waited for his mistress's commands, " Come," said Madamoiselle, " there is no time to be lost, and your treatment on your arrival will entirely depend on the docility with

which you behave towards your conductor, and, turning to the Signora, I request that my orders may be immediately obeyed."

"I should have given you an earlier notice, but really, my dear friend, you have become so torpid of late, that I am afraid a total stagnation must succeed, and I was anxious to rouse you from this lethargy."

Jessica would have excused herself, but found it impossible to resist Madamoiselle's entreaties. "I have no idea," said she, "of your being allowed to rest in this supine state, all your faculties lying dormant, whilst I am obliged to rack my brain from morning till night to find amusement for two men so stupid, that it is really an Herculean labour to force a smile after all my exertions."

Jessica now prepared to accompany Madamoiselle, and she went up stairs along with her, for the purpose of as-

sisting, as she termed it, in packing, though she rather retarded Jessica's labours..

" My poor Louis," said she, " will be quite overjoyed to see you, and my father will, I hope, be restored to good humour, for one has been so intolerably dismal, and the other so cross, that I had serious thoughts of retiring into a convent for the remainder of my days: don't you think I look uncommonly pale and as if I had been suffering severe anxiety ?

" I assure you," rising and looking at herself in the glass, " it always has visible effects upon my frame."

Jessica replied, " that she was not at all sensible of the alteration which she complained of."

" Well, I am happy to hear you say so," interrupted Madamoiselle, " for I began to entertain serious apprehensions for my own safety, and the thought of

leaving you and my father and Louis, rendered me quite miserable.

" Poor Louis in *particular* is so very helpless, that I do not know what might become of him.

" It is really, my dear Signora, a very unpleasant thing to be of such consequence, and you cannot conceive what my feelings are."

Jessica smiled, and assured her that she could not in that respect enter into them.

They now prepared to depart; and in the afternoon of that day arrived at Monsieur Delaborde's cottage. It was an elegant low building, situated in the midst of very spacious grounds, which were ornamented by the hand of taste, and where nothing seemed wanting that nature could supply, or luxury procure.

Jessica expressed her admiration of the beauties of their seat to Madamoi-

selle. "Yes," said she, "it is a pretty place, but not sufficiently gothic to suit the pensive turn of my mind.

"We want a moat and draw-bridge, and all those accompaniments of an ancient castle; there is nothing here which reminds us of the days of chivalry, and poor Louis looks as little, like one of the knights of old," "as his sister," said Jessica, interrupting her, "looks like a distressed damsel."

They had by this time arrived at the house, and Monsieur Delaborde hearing the carriage, came out to welcome Jessica, and after affectionately saluting her, led her into his study, where in a few minutes Delaborde, who had gone out in the hope of meeting the carriage, returned, and with his sister entered the room.

"Now," said Madamoiselle, "in return for the kindness which I have this morning done you and my father, by

going to Montpelier to satisfy your impatience to see the Signora, I expect you will exert yourself to appear to the best advantage, for your stupidity has of late preyed so much on my spirits, that the Signora thinks me quite altered; it was only indeed by the graceful lightness of my form that herself or Philip were able to recognize me."

Delaborde smiled at this sally of his sister's, and addressing Jessica, affectionately enquired after her health. "You," he said, "if I may judge from appearances, though those I hope deceive me, have more cause to complain on that head than Adellé."

Jessica answered to his enquiries, that she was tolerably well. "I hope," said Monsieur, "that if your health has at all declined, and I must, though unwillingly, concur with Louis in fearing that it has from the alteration in your looks, I hope you will not hesitate to

have immediate and the very best advice."

"There now," said Madamoiselle, "that is always the case; here have I been pining away gradually for the last three months, during the whole of which time I have not received one kind enquiry on the subject; all the domestics seem sensible of my precarious state; even Fanchon regards me with eyes of sympathy, and yet my natural protectors are wholly regardless of my situation. How terribly merit is overlooked! Really, my dear Signora, that is a melancholy reflection, which often strikes me in dwelling on my own case."

Before Jessica could reply to this observation, coffee was served, after which the party wandered out in the grounds till late in the evening. Monsieur however entreated that they would return to the house on Jessica's account, of

whose health he said he felt himself bound to take charge.

They terminated their walk, and concluded the evening by dancing.

CHAPTER XLI.

That time is past . . . .
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures—

WORDSWORTH.

In this happy family Jessica experienced all the pleasure of which in her present forlorn situation she could be sensible.

From Monsieur Delaborde she received daily marks of an almost paternal affection, and Madamoiselle with Delaborde, strove to divert her mind by the most delicate and flattering attentions, and exerting their powers in every way for her amusement.

A few days after Jessica's arrival there, Madamoiselle one morning entered the room.

"I am come," said she, "to request you will prepare a smart dress; I am going to give a fête to-morrow, for it will then be twenty-three years since a personage for whose brilliant talents and extraordinary merits I have the highest admiration and respect, was ushered into the world, and you are so fortunate as to possess her friendship."

"Then," said Jessica, "I presume it is Madamoiselle Delaborde, the anniversary of whose birth I am invited to celebrate."

"The very same," said Madamoiselle, "who intends herself the honour of opening the ball with your servant Philip. This yearly festival amuses our domestics, and I never think of inviting any of my own acquaintances, for they can enjoy themselves every day, and I chuse that my fête should be given to

those who will regret when it is over, and look forward to the return of it with pleasure, not yawn over the invitation when they receive it, make it a matter of indifference whether they come or not, and after they return home abuse me and every thing they have met with, for I believe that is just the case with nine tenths of the people who think they honour me by their notice."

"I hope," said Jessica, "you do not include all those under that censure who receive your hospitable attentions." "Oh no, by no means, there are some good quiet sort of persons, who are too indolent to make ill-natured comments."

"And of that description then," said Jessica smiling, "I suppose you esteem me?" "Pho, pho, you are English, you know," replied Madamoiselle, "and that is another sort of being.

"But come, I must go seek out

Philip, and prepare him for the honour I intend myself."

"Are you really serious," said Jessica, "respecting this ball?" "Oh, perfectly serious I assure you, and if you will just step into the housekeeper's room, you will find her busily employed for the occasion.

"You must know that I have to dine with me fourteen little girls, who are educated at my own expence; that is, in fact, they are indebted to my father's bounty, and are brought up on my plan; now having said this, you will of course expect to find them models of perfection. "And in what way," interrupted Jessica, "do you dispose of them, when arrived at maturer years?"

"In that which is most adapted to their different talents," replied Madamoiselle, "for that is the only method by which we can thoroughly succeed in a system of this kind.

"The employment must be made

subservient to the abilities, since those cannot be rendered subservient to the employment; and as, notwithstanding my *vast* powers, I cannot give capacity, I am obliged to make the most of what I find.

" Some of these girls have discovered a turn for one thing, and some another, and I have carefully cultivated the taste which I found predominate.

" One or two of them earn a subsistence by flower-making, which is merely an effort of industry; another discovered a genius for drawing, I had her regularly instructed, and she is employed in many of the neighbouring families.

" Two of them live by teaching writing and geography, and my friends make a point of employing them as an encouragement to my little institution, in the support of which several persons would have joined me, but I declined

their offers for this reason—That as I never intend to marry, the opportunity of overlooking them will still be afforded me, and I am so fond of doing things my own way, that the sentiments of my friends might not have assimilated with my own, and thus the harmony of my plan have been interrupted, if not wholly defeated."

"But why," replied Jessica, "have you entered into such a resolution as that of celibacy, so well calculated as you seem to dispense, and partake of happiness, and of a disposition so social? but I should lament if I could seriously imagine that your determination was unalterable."

"Indeed, my dear Signora," she said, "it is very true, but that is a subject on which I never dwell.

"Will you accompany me down stairs, or follow me, for I must look after my domestic concerns," and then

shutting the door, ran down humming a French air.

Jessica had been much gratified by this short interview, which had served to set the amiable qualities of Madamoiselle in so striking a point of view.

She saw that amidst all her apparent negligence, and volatility of thought and manner, that she possessed intrinsic worth, and that, without ostentation or parade, she was daily in the performance of the most valuable and praiseworthy actions.

Jessica now went down, and found Madamoiselle busily employed with the housekeeper in preparing for the girls, whom she expected the following day.

She had now finished, and Jessica accompanied her to her dressing room.

" I am now going to examine my stores," said she, " to find rewards for

merit;" and taking from her bureau a variety of little books, pocket-books, &c. Madamoiselle laid them on the table: "These are a yearly gift which I receive from Louis," said she, "who is never backward in doing a generous action, when any person will point it out to him; though poor Louis seldom finds out those things himself.

"These are his donation to my little school, which he presents to the girls on my birth-day, as a delicate compliment to me."

Monsieur now joined Jessica and his daughter, and the party rambled out till dinner.

The following day presented Jessica with a sight truly gratifying to her feelings, in the harmony that reigned throughout the little circle, where Madamoiselle presided, and, attended by herself, dined with the girls, whose gateful acknowledgments and happy

looks, seemed an ample compensation to their kind patroness for all the trouble which they occasioned her.

The evening was concluded with a ball, which was opened by herself and old Philip; she assured him that the whole of the lodging scene had made an impression on her heart which could never be effaced, and she rejoiced in giving this public testimony of her decided predilection.

Monsieur Delaborde danced with the housekeeper, whilst he introduced his own servant to Jessica, and Delaborde led out one of his sister's protegées.

The evening was passed in that harmony which can only be felt by the virtuous on contemplating the happy consequences arising from their own benevolence; and on leaving the ball-room, the party retired to the saloon, where, after an excellent col-

lation provided by the mistress of the feast, they drank to the health, happiness, and prosperity of herself and her friends.

CHAPTER XLII.

I've been surpris'd in an unguarded hour,
But must not now go back; the love that lay
Half smother'd in my breast, has broke through all
It's weak restraints, and burns in it's full lustre;
I cannot, if I would, conceal it from thee.

ADDISON.

THE morning arrived on which Emilie's interview with the Chevalier was to take place, and oppressed by various sensations, she prepared herself for it. She found him awaiting her appearance. "Since parting from you yesterday," he said, "I have been revolving various plans in my mind for your future comfort, which it would be so much my pride and happiness to promote; your longer

residence here must be productive of daily misery, and teems with difficulty and dread.

" I cannot bear to leave you exposed to the machinations of the Marchese, yet I know not what alternative to propose; I have no mother, no female relative, or friend to whose protection, were you anxious to escape from the evils with which you are surrounded, I could convey you."

He paused, and Emilie observed the agitation of his countenance.

" How then," said he, " can I render you any service?"

" Your kind interest for me," returned Emilie, " excites my warmest gratitude, a gratitude that can only terminate with my life; unfortunate am I to have awakened that compassion, which has already involved you in difficulties; but I believe I must continue to wait with patience the event."

" You are apprized," said the Cheva-

lier, " of my situation, of the circumstances under which I am placed, and could I dare to hope that you would bestow one favourable thought on me, unblest as I am by the gifts of fortune, and unfriended by the world, I could not in justice presume so far as to hope for such a distinction. No, ardently as I love the Signora, and much as my heart acknowledges her worth, I do not entreat her to unite herself to a man poor and unfortunate as myself, though in her esteem I should feel happier than the affection of any other could render me; yet her comfort is too dear to me to ask such a sacrifice.

" I go to be wretched, but I cannot endure the thought of rendering her so reared in the bosom of plenty, unused to cope with the hardships of poverty; how could I bear to witness the diminution of those comforts, to behold her struggling with the evils that might await her.

"I have nothing but the prospect of embarrassment to look forward to, the goods of fortune are not, never can be mine." The Chevalier stopt, and looking at Emilie, she replied with much firmness: "I do not hesistate to acknowledge my sense of your worth, and my obligations to you, neither of which, whilst memory holds her seat, will ever be forgotten, and under other circumstances I frankly own, that your merits would have induced me to listen to your proposal; but I am poor and unfortunate as yourself, and wish not to add to those evils the consciousness of error.

"To encrease your embarrasments by consenting to unite my fate with your's, would be a mode of couduct unworthy of my character.

"To escape from the calamities which threaten me is indeed my earnest wish, but not by any mode which might further involve you."

"Can you, then, my beloved Signora,"

said the Chevalier, " suppose that I could deem any thing a sacrifice that might contribute to your comfort.

" Heaven knows with what joyful sensations I could have dedicated to you the remainder of my life; but imperious necessity forbids me to glance my thoughts towards an event that might be productive of misery to one whose happiness is far dearer to me than my own.

" Should the prospect brighten at some future period, and the cloud which hangs over my present situation be dispelled, the hope of passing with you the remainder of a life, which has hitherto proved gloomy and inauspicious, would support me under the sensations which now oppress me, and encourage my mind to the endurance of that bitter self-denial, which I must practice in banishment from you. And now will you condemn me as presumptuous if I entreat that I may still preserve some portion of

your esteem, and that should the obstacles that now intervene, at a future hour yield and permit it, you will allow of my return to you."

"My esteem for you," said Emilie, "neither time or absence will have power to weaken; it was founded on an opinion of your worth, and rests with yourself to preserve or destroy.

"It is my desire for the present to retire to some convent, where I could be quietly sheltered from the coming storm, and yet I know of none in this province where I could be securely placed, and the least probability of the Marchese's discovering my retreat would of itself embitter the little tranquillity I might enjoy."

"The abbess of the Cecilian order once resided in Naples, was, I well recollect it's being mentioned, an intimate friend of my mother's. The order have since removed, though I do not exactly know whither. It was mentioned that

they had left Italy entirely, and taken up their abode in the province of Languedoc; to the abbess I think I might safely impart my story, and there, perhaps, more securely dwell. Though the journey is long, and it is uncertain whether I might be so fortunate as to obtain a reception."

"I do not much approve," said the Chevalier, "this plan of entering into a convent; I fear they will use all their influence, and that it may be too successful in prevailing upon you to become one of the sisterhood." "Yet you have already," replied Emilie, "witnessed one instance of my firmness in resistance."

"But how different the motives that might govern," interrupted he; "in the one you were actuated by principles of rectitude, which would not in the other be sacrificed, and where no very powerful motive opposes; I know that perseverance may do much; promise me

then that you will not suffer yourself to be wearied into compliance, should they be urgent with you to take the veil, for the idea that you might be exposed to such a step, would render me miserable."

"I will enter into no promises with you," said Emilie, "on this subject; you may rely on my firmness in resisting this kind of persecution; I never approved of voluntary sequestration from the world, and I cannot be induced to enter into a plan in which my sentiments do not concur." "With these sentiments, then," said the Chevalier, "I must rest satisfied, fondly hoping for the happy period when we may be reunited."

They conversed on the subject of the apartment in the castle, and again examined the pictures which had so much excited their interest.

It was agreed, previous to their separating, that the Chevalier should convey

Emilie from the castle, to the friends whom she had mentioned; this was not a plan entirely consonant to the wishes or sentiments of Emilie; but her present situation was peculiarly unfortunate, residing in the house of a man whom she had been apprized had a wife in existence, and which information had since been too fatally corroborated; for she no longer doubted that the picture of the lady was that of the Marchese's wretched wife; these were circumstances that gave courage to Emilie's resolution of flying from the evils with which she was encompassed, and her mind was more reconciled to the step she was preparing to take from it's evident necessity. What in other circumstances she would have shrunk from as an indelicate proceeding, was now no longer so.

The Chevalier accompanied Emilie to the gates of the grounds leading to the castle, and it was agreed that the follow-

ing morning they should commence their journey.

After parting with him, Emilie retired to her own room in that solitary mansion, and prepared for her flight. She threw open the window, and leaned from it. The air was colder than usual, and the wind breathed forth in hollow murmurs it's melancholy sound, the sky was overcast, and seemed to threaten an approaching storm, the general face of nature appeared enveloped in gloom, the heart of Emilie was sad, and her mind in unison with the cheerless scene around her.

" To-morrow," said she, " to-morrow at this hour, I shall be far from hence; what are the calamities that may next await me, I know not, yet I will endeavour to pursue the path of rectitude, and leave all else to the disposal of a perfectly wise and good Being; to know that the Chevalier loves me is certainly some consolation under what I feel, yet

we have no prospects, and perhaps it might be happier were we wholly indifferent to each other:" with these reflections did Emilie beguile the time till it was nearly dark, when closing the window, she finished her preparations, and descended to the apartment where she usually sat.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Meanwhile disease, with slow decay,
Moulder'd his feeble frame away;
And as his evening sun declin'd,
The shadows deepen'd o'er his mind;
What doubts and terrors then possess'd
The dark dominion of his breast.

MONTGOMERY.

VALDESA remained in London, where no tidings of Jessica yet reached him. Mr. Gurney had not returned to town, nor would Valdesa have applied to him; his mind was now completely steeled against his wife, and he endeavoured to reason himself into the idea, that to think of her longer would be a weakness unworthy of his character.

The few words which had so often

recurred to his mind, now dwelt there, frequently so wholly absorbing it as to render him insensible to all outward objects.

"Fool of her artifices, and dupe to false appearances, have I too long been!" he would exclaim, whilst ruminating on Jessica's silence. "No, she loves me not, it is too evident. Why then does this weakness still cling to my heart? I will banish it, it shall no longer have a place there!" His finances reduced, and his mind soured by its own gloom, Valdesa became silent, sullen, and unsocial; he would have yielded to the extreme of poverty rather than have appropriated one farthing of Jessica's to his own purposes; and he would have sunk beneath the anguish of his mind before he would have disclosed to any human being one particle of his sufferings.

Valdesa revolved in his thoughts some plan of support; and that of instructing pupils in his own and the French lan-

guage, was that which finally presented itself. Too proud to ask or receive pecuniary obligations, he would have submitted to starve rather than have solicited favours; and wholly unknown as he was, the plan which he had projected was likely to teem with difficulty, since he had none to recommend him or aid his endeavours.

The papers relative to the small estate bequeathed to him by his maternal grandfather, Valdesa had left with Jessica, and as the place of his residence was unknown, he could not now receive any benefit from it. The only person entrusted with the management of it would, he knew, address him at Montpelier, and when he glanced his thoughts towards that place, "She will not," would he say, "be exposed to the horrors of want; her feelings in that respect will not be wounded, and I am satisfied."

The tear would, however, notwith-

standing his proud efforts to check it, sometimes burst from his eye, and had he for one moment recalled to his mind the parting injunction of his wife, passion might have subsided, and reason resumed her dominion over him.

One night, as Valdesa was sat by the embers of a dying fire in his solitary lodging, reflecting almost to madness, he was informed, that a person below desired to speak with him, and on going down the man acquainted him, that if his name was Valdesa, a gentleman at the Crown and Anchor desired to speak with him. Valdesa replied in the affirmative, and prepared to accompany the man, conjecturing as they went who this gentleman could possibly be; on their arriving there he sent one of the waiters to inform the gentleman that he waited his commands, and the man returned, saying, that he requested the Signor to walk up stairs. When Valdesa entered the room, he found, to his great surprise,

that this stranger was the same whom he had first met with at that house, and with whom he had since, when there, occasionally conversed.

He was stretched on the bed, pale, emaciated, and evidently in the last stage of some severe disorder. "I have taken a great liberty," said he, raising himself from the pillow, whilst he addressed Valdesa, "in applying to you on so slight an acquaintance as that which I have had with you; but when a man is unfortunate, he does not always, perhaps, consider propriety so much as his own comfort."

Valdesa assured him, that he thought himself honoured by this proof of his confidence, and enquired what he could do to serve him.

"The services," said he, "that can be rendered to me, whilst I remain here, will be of short duration, since I feel that I shall not long be an inhabitant of this earth. It is not on my own account

that I take the liberty of applying to you, but to deliver into your hands a packet of papers, that contain some satisfaction to those connected with me, should they yet indeed exist; you are at liberty to peruse them yourself since they may convey some useful warnings. I only request, after doing that, that you will preserve them, and if you should ever meet with him to whom they are most particularly addressed, you will then deliver them into his hands.

" Recrimination now is useless, and reproaches unbecoming from a son to his father, or I could descant on that subject; I could speak to him of what I feel: how much wiser would have been the father, and how much happier the son, if that son had been educated on the broad basis of religion. I feel this conviction when too late; would that I could recall the years of my past life, how differently should I employ them."

The stranger seemed faint from the

fatigue of speaking, and Valdesa assured him, that the packet should be disposed of according to his direction, if any fortunate chance should ever present him to the gentleman to whom it was addressed.

He appeared composed by this assurance, and Valdesa sat down by his side, conversing on his complaint.

"Have you no medical assistance," said he; "for surely in your situation it is highly necessary that you should, and if you will allow me to make the application, I shall have much satisfaction in doing it?"

"No," he replied, "medicine will do nothing for me; I know that my complaints are incurable, and I have no money to lavish on physicians."

"But it would be a relief to the minds of those around you," said Valdesa, "to know that nothing was left undone, and after the application you have honoured me with, I feel myself responsible."

He persisted, notwithstanding, in his determination of having no advice, and Valdesa stayed by him until a late hour; when promising to see him again in the morning, he returned to his lodgings, where this singular adventure again recurred to his mind.

There was a peculiarity in the manner of this stranger, something eccentric in his conversation that looked like derangement of mind.

From many of the conversations which Valdesa had held with him in their accidental meetings, he was convinced that he had received a liberal education, and his manners were those of a man of superior rank, yet he had never spoken of any one with whom he was connected, either by the ties of consanguinity or friendship, except in this interview, which made the mention of his father, in his directions respecting the papers, necessary.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"The hand of death pressed heavy upon his eyelids; and hardly could the wheel at the cistern turn round it's circle."

STERNE.

In the morning Valdesa found the stranger very weak and ill, having passed a sleepless night; his cough seemed to oppress him much, and he breathed with extreme difficulty.

Valdesa again urged him to allow of his calling in a physician, but he obstinately persisted in his refusal.

As he sat up in bed supported by pillows, "I have an unconquerable dread," said he, addressing Valdesa, "of being buried alive, and it is a task which

I must impose on your humanity, to see that they do not hurry me into my grave before I am really dead, which I fear may too often be the case; I recollect a circumstance of that kind having nearly happened to a person with whom I was acquainted, who died abroad, and it made such an impression on my mind, as I have not yet lost sight of."

Valdesa assured him that every thing should be done respecting which he had shewn the least anxiety: "But I trust, added he, "that you may recover, and these directions will then be unnecessary." "No," replied he, "that is an event to which I do not look forward, and about which I am not solicitous; I do not know that the world contains one being, who interests himself in my fate. I might perhaps, have been the favourite of mankind, had I acted in such a manner as to merit their favour, but I am abandoned, and I wish to die."

To this address Valdesa could make

no reply: "I wish not," added the stranger, "to impose on your humanity by false pretences, or to awaken your compassion by affecting to be what I am not; I am unfortunate because I have been imprudent, and miserable because I have been guilty; I will not, however, anticipate; the packet that I have delivered to your care will inform you of those particulars with which I am not able to acquaint you."

Valdesa enquired if there was any other service that he could render him.

"I know of no other," replied he, "or I would certainly take the liberty of mentioning it." He tried to converse, but his voice became tremulous, and he gave up the attempt.

After some pause, however, he renewed the conversation. "The only creature," said he, "who, I beleive, has ever conceived any attachment to me, is a dog which you have seen with me, and I wish you would accept of him; it would

be a satisfaction to me, that he was taken care of, and I should be glad to be assured that he, poor fellow, would not share his master's fate, in being left to die amongst strangers. He has followed me in my wanderings, and I have always found him faithful."

Valdesa promised that he would take care of the animal, and as it was long since the stranger had taken any refreshment, he prevailed with him to have some; after which appearing in some degree revived, Valdesa left him, with the promise of returning again in the evening.

The stranger had already commited to Valdesa's care the packet, and when he had seated himself in his lodging, he felt a powerful desire to examine it, but he recollected that though no conditions were annexed to the perusal of it, that the stranger might not wish that it should be opened whilst he yet lived, and this consideration induced Valdesa

to lock it up in his writing desk, and wait the event.

At night he returned, and found a visible alteration in the appearance of the stranger; he seemed insensible to all that passed, and the person who was employed in watching over him, informed Valdesa that it was many hours since he had spoken.

Valdesa seated himself by his side, and at midnight he breathed his last. He felt sensibly shocked, whilst he contemplated this monument of human instability; here there seemed to have been talents, personal accomplishments, and personal attractions, yet all blasted, it evidently appeared, by the stranger's own confession, by criminal imprudence or vicious excess, and those originating in a want of religion, since that was what he had most lamented in the disclosure of his errors.

Valdesa gave the proper orders respecting him, and on searching his portman-

teau, found in a purse there thirty guineas, a sum sufficient, Valdesa conceived, to defray the necessary expences of his interment, and on enquiring at the tavern, he was informed that the people had been regularly paid by the stranger, even to the last day of his existence.

Valdesa did not leave the house for many hours together, till he had seen the remains of the stranger properly interred, and taken care that every thing which he mentioned nad been attended to. He then returned, with his new companion, to his lodgings, and there prepared to enter upon the manuscript which had been given to him, and after breaking open the seal began:

" As the most consummate virtue is weak, defective, and insufficient, so are all the accomplishments of the mind, the graces of exterior, vain and trifling, without the aid of Christianity; it is that only which subdues the passions of man, and leads him on to peace. To those

into whose hands these papers may fall, it may not be improper to premise, that they are the production of a man educated in the principles of infidelity, who has lived to reflect on his errors, and to view with sensations of remorse the transactions of his past life.

" Early sent into life, with an idea of independence, unused to controul in any action, or to opposition in sentiment, I was impressed with the idea that from my decision there could be no appeal.

" My father was a man of fortune and consequence, and being anxious that his only son should be found worthy to succeed him in his honours, I received a laboured education. Those around me were slaves to my caprices, and I was taught to consider every one at my command; my genius was not to be shackled, my systems were to be of my own forming; until the age of fourteen, I never heard the subject of religion mentioned, and I was then told that I was to

adopt that most consonant with my ideas; I read various authors before I came to any conclusion, and when I had fully determined what system to embrace, I made a point of never reading any work, or entering upon any argument, that might have a tendency to change the current by which I was borne down.

" My father congratulated me on my enlightened understanding, and rejoiced that I had a mind which rose superior to the prejudices of the vulgar.

" 'Tis only for the ignorant and unlettered, he would say, to embrace the religion handed down by their forefathers; it is proper enough for them, because it promotes subordination, and and more abstruse doctrines they could not comprehend; but my son must not be taught to believe what he cannot make compatible with reason."

" Thus flattered by a parent, of whose intellectual powers I had formed a high idea, I conceived that my opinions were

the test of truth, and with those I embarked in the busy scenes of the world.

"I shall say nothing of the tyranny which I exercised over my domestics, whom as the, "Swinish multitude," I considered as a different species of beings; the ties of filial affection too were very slight; in my code of philosophy they might be assumed or laid aside at pleasure.

"My father had large possessions in the West Indies, which I was anxious to visit; I mentioned my plan, and it was of course concurred in. I left England, and arrived at the island of Antigua. Surrounded by every species of luxury that unbounded wealth could procure, I revelled in all the pride of greatness.

"During my residence abroad, I became acquainted with a family residing on my father's estate, and employed in some degree in the management of it. One of it's members, a beautiful young

woman, I suddenly conceived a strong affection for. She had been engaged for a long period, and much attached to a young man in her own situation, living in a distant part of the island; this, however, was no obstacle to me, and I determined to marry her. I mentioned my proposal to her father, who seemed restrained by fear from opposing my wishes. I saw his daughter, and I made known to her my passion; she candidly declared that her affections were engaged, and that she could not listen to my proposal.

" Marriage I did not conceive to be of any consequence, considered as an institution, but I knew that I had no alternative. Monimia had brothers who would have risen in defence of her injured honour, and I felt that I must be compelled to marry her; I visited her frequently, and found her invariably stedfast in her refusal.

" To one who had never suffered con-

tradiction on the slightest occasion, who had been accustomed to gratify every passion without restraint or controul, this was a severe mortification, and at length irritated by her coldness, almost to madness, I threatened her father with ruin if she still persisted in her refusal. On this occasion never can I forget the language of her brother, who presented himself before me.

" Think you," said he, " that we can be forced into a compliance against which humanity revolts, because you are rich and powerful, we poor and unfortunate? No, this arm, unnerved in strength by European luxury, shall still support an aged father, and protect a virtuous sister. Monimia shall be united to the man she loves, and we will trust in God for our support!"

" These were sentiments that I had been unaccustomed to; I felt that they did honour to this young man's heart, and for a moment the tinge of shame on

my cheek superseded the blush of rage. I found that I must not expect all those with whom I had to cope to yield so implicitly to my will as I expected; I was determined, however, to carry my plans into effect, though I knew those could only be accomplished in the absence of this young man. He was the chief stay of his family, to him they looked up for counsel and protection; to dispatch him therefore on business to some other part of the island, was my only resource, this then was done:" here as Valdesa unfolded the manuscript there was a long break in the lines. It began again. "Why does my hand tremble when I come to this part of my narative? I was not the murderer of Amiens, it was not my hand that effected the deed, yet it was done; yes, I was the first cause, and if there is a day of retribution, what must then be my fate!

"I married Monimia; her father torn

from his comfortable habitation, she sued for him in his old age, exposed to the bitterness of poverty. She knelt at my feet, wept and entreated; I was inexorable, and she complied with my conditions. Yet I was not happy; the form of Amiens seemed to haunt me, and I determined to return to England. I left my wife, left her with an infant child, deserted them, and flew to my own clime, to drown in dissipation the sense of my crimes."

CHAPTER XLV.

His lost fortune, his lost wife and child lie
Heavy on him. The ghost of his murder'd time,
Full stain'd with folly and gash'd with vice, haunts
His distracted thought. Conscience, which long
Had slept, awakes like a giant refresh'd with
Wine, lays waste all his former thoughts and desires,
And like a long depos'd now victorious prince, on his
Bleeding heart imposes inflicts its own.

YOUNG.

"ON my arrival in England I found that my father yet lived; I did not however hasten to him as might have been expected, but continued in the metropolis for a long period; he heard of my being there, and piqued at my neglect, he wrote to me to go down to him.

"It was long however ere I obeyed the summons; whether it was something like conscience that struck me, or I was determined he should find that I yet retained a spirit of independence, I know not, nor did I wish to investigate my feelings too deeply on this point.

"Engrossed by scenes of dissipation, I had neither time or inclination to reflect. One friend I had, though he would have been my friend no longer, had he been acquainted with the extent of my crimes; these were however not long concealed; I seduced from him the affections of a woman who was bound to him by ties the most sacred, and I abandoned her also. I returned to my father's house, whom, from complicated causes, I found a prey to misery; that misery was increased by disappointed hope, on beholding his son alienated from him.

"One morning my father entered my

apartment in an agony of rage; he had received letters from the island of Antigua; my marriage with the daughter of his steward was disclosed, and my desertion of her and her infant son.

"To his honour be it said, that the latter circumstance seemed most to have irritated his mind. He ordered me to leave his house and never see him more.

"For the first time on quitting the presence of a father, a sensation like remorse mingled with the regret that visited my heart. I was too proud however to implore forgiveness, I looked round the world where no shadow of comfort presented itself, and I felt a momentary desire to appeal to some higher power.

"The desertion that reigned in my mind, the exposure of my crimes, and the contempt and abhorrence which I was convinced mankind would feel

towards me, rushed on my imagination and filled me with despair, and in these moments I have exclaimed, " is there indeed a God," an over-ruling power, before whom we must appear, and at whose dread tribunal answer for our crimes.

" I determined to return to the West Indies, and there what a scene presented itself. The possessions of my father all swallowed up in one dreadful night; an earthquake arose which had desolated that part of the island. My wife, her father, and her infant had perished, and my hopes of prosperity were levelled with the dust. Long did I attempt to save something from the wreck, but my efforts have proved ineffectual, and poverty must henceforth be my portion, poverty unconsoled by any reflection which can reconcile me to myself.

" Left to the unrestrained indulgence of ill-directed passion, unaided by the

friendly light of religion, I die the victim of infidelity, the author of my own miseries.

"That being who gave me life may some time peruse these and the inclosed papers. How much happier would it have proved if he had impressed my heart with the sacred truths of Christianity, and not permitted my mind, whilst unformed, to wander in the vain speculations of blind philosophy.

"My sufferings are the offspring of crimes, those crimes proceeding from the impetuosity of passion, which must always govern when unaided by higher principles than those of human reason."

Valdesa now closed the packet, and for the first time recollected that the stranger had not given him the name of his father or any clue to discover his abode; nor was any direction attached to the papers. There were some others enclosed, which were signed with

the initials of the stranger's name, Valdesa supposed H. H. But this did not alone enable him to make any discovery relative to the person to whom they were addressed, and he condemned himself for omitting to make more particular enquiries.

Valdesa felt extremely anxious respecting their delivery, though he feared that no such opportunity might ever be afforded him; the only method by which he was likely to obtain the desired information was by making particular inquiries who had lost large West India possessions in Antigua, and then advertising the circumstance, which, after some consideration, he determined upon doing.

Valdesa perused again and again the manuscript which excited his interest and surprise. He thought of what an ornament to society the writer of it might have proved, had he received a proper education; how much that pa-

vent must have to reproach himself, who had thus suffered him to float on the tide of life with only the feeble light of human reason.

His genuine confession of his errors was a proof that his mind was not completely vitiated, and Valdesa mourned that he had not lived to be reconciled to his father.

The papers that Valdesa had not yet read, but only slightly glanced his eye over, were most of them copies of letters from his wife, addressed to him whilst resident in England, and those certainly served to place his conduct in a most heinous light. They were the language of a heart fully conscious of its injuries, yet disdaining to vent itself in reproaches.

As Valdesa closed the pages, he thought for a moment of his own wife. "Yet how far different," said he, "is my situation. She has deserted me, I have not abandoned her; are these then

your promises, the termination of our mutual vows?" and then rising from his seat, he paced the room in all the agony of blasted hope and disappointed expectation.

"Never again," he exclaimed, "will I suffer myself to be imposed on by an object, on whom my heart yet fondly doats. No, I will fly to the forest, and there, far from the haunts of man, take up my comfortless abode; the wind whistling around my solitary dwelling shall hush me to rest, and I will mingle with the world no more. What have I found in it but ingratitude and falsehood, the voice that spoke but to deceive, and the smile that flattered to betray? Yet it would relieve my mind to behold her once more, to pour forth the bitterness of my heart, and then leave her for ever."

In these melancholy reflections did Valdesa daily indulge, and seemed rather

to court than repel the gloomy impressions that presented themselves.

To have returned to Montpelier at all hazards, would certainly have been the happiest plan he could have adopted. Too indignant and too proud to seek any investigation of the cause of Jessica's silence, Valdesa was suffering more from these daily conflicts than a confirmation of her indifference would have caused.

The manuscript of the stranger might have afforded an usefel lesson to him, but his he conceived were only the feelings of an injured man, and he sought not to repress them.

Valdesa was now obliged to have recourse to the most rigid œconomy, since his finances were nearly exhausted, and no probable means of support presented itself.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Hopeless to find, yet loth to leave unsought.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE misery of Jessica daily increased on the continued silence of her husband, and she consulted Monsieur Delaborde on the propriety of going over to England; he knew not what to advise, and seemed still anxious that she should wait the event a little while longer.

Attentive to her slightest wishes, it seemed to be the study of this amiable family to render her every comfort in their power. Far advanced

in her pregnancy, and daily expecting her accouchement, Jessica's leaving Montpelier at this juncture, they conceived to be incompatible with her health or safety, and Madamoiselle in particular insisted that she should remain at their house during the period of her confinement.

"I am an excellent nurse," said she, "and I think the squalling of a child the finest music imaginable; besides it will make a bustle in the house, and that's what my heart doats on, to see Louis as if overjoyed that he's alive, and my father all hurry and importance, running, giving twenty different directions in a breath, for poor man he's never very busy above once a year. Oh, you have no idea what a fine sight it is; besides I never saw a little Italian, and I just long to know what sort of a little animal it will be. I dare say very dignified and stately, and then if it resembles, the Signora

will be giving reason for every thing it does, almost as soon as it can speak; besides, as I have provided for it already I think it will be very hard if I am not to have my share of its company;" and going to some drawers in her dressing-room, Madamoiselle returned loaded with clothes of every description for a child, made of the richest materials. After placing them on the table, "these," said she, "have furnished employment for myself and my girls for the last three months, and now tell me, are we not vastly industrious?"

Jessica expressed her earnest sense of Madamoiselle's kindness, and whilst the tears started from her eye, "Indeed, my dear Madamoiselle," said she, "I am wholly at a loss how to evince my gratitude to you and your's, for all your unmerited kindness to an unfortunate woman." She turned to the window, and Madamoiselle observing the tear on

her cheek, tenderly embraced and entreated her to be comforted.

"Now, my dear Signora," said she, "you do not consider that all this time we have been conferring the greatest favour on ourselves. My father and Louis would, I am certain, be wretched at your departure; and I have a fatal presentiment that I should never survive my separation from old Philip; but to see you thus unhappy will certainly bring on one of those melancholy fits which my friend the physiognomist described; and," going to the glass, "I really now," she added, "have already assumed a pensive cast of countenance, and I fear that I shall relapse into my former state. Do you know I was once so foolish as to be in love, which is a secret that I never let you into before, and what, I dare say, you would never have suspected." "Had you told me," said Jessica, "that you had inspired that

passion in another, I should have been less surprised." "I conceived that I had," replied Madamoiselle; "but after some months of error, I was painfully undeceived. It is now, however, past," continued she; "but the sensation yet remains; and," smiling through her tears, "I liked not the thought of being interred under a willow tree, so I took courage to enter into society once more, and have since acted rationally like the rest of my neighbours."

Madamoiselle stopped, and rising from her seat, as if anxious to change the subject, "I am now going," said she, "to look after my girls, whom I have lately terribly neglected. I shall, however, desire my father to put on his best appearance to escort the Signora an airing, whilst I order the carriage for that purpose; and now not a word of denial, that rather not is a term I do not relish in persons I have to deal with. It will do you both good and you must go, I

never suffer any one to be happy in their own way, it is too great an indulgence;" and then shutting the door of the apartment, Madamoiselle ran down stairs.

Every day brought with it some new proof of her amiable disposition, yet Jessica feared that her gaiety was not entirely spontaneous; but rather an effort of philosophy to shake off some latent disquietude. She was the idol of her father and brother, and much beloved by all the domestics, and Jessica wondered how she had so well escaped the pernicious effects of indulgence.

CHAPTER XLVII.

A SERVANT now came up to inform the Signora, that Monsieur was waiting for her, and she hastened to him. They drove towards Montpelier, and again met the same old gentleman whose appearance had before so much attracted Jessica. She mentioned to Monsieur the circumstance, but found that he had no knowledge of him, except having occasionally met him in his walks. On their return they found Madamoiselle and Delaborde in the grounds, awaiting their arrival, and, sending on the carriage, they walked to the house with them. "I have been all the morning," said Madamoiselle, "amongst my girls,

and when I got home I found Louis and Fanchon by the fire, both in a listless attitude. So having before sent you and my father," turning to the Signora, "an airing, I have now come out for the same purpose with them; for, really, I stood a long time contemplating both before I could determine which looked the most stupid; at last, I must unwillingly confess, that I was obliged to allow Louis the preference." Delaborde smiled good naturedly, as usual, at his sister's raillery, and turning to Jessica, enquired if she intended honouring them with her company to the ball at Montpelier that evening. She replied in the negative, and Madamoiselle added, "I shall put in my veto there, nor do I intend going myself; I think I shall stay with my father and the Signora, unless, indeed, that old Philip will honour me with his hand, and exhibit to the natives of Montpelier the fashionable English steps."—"Indeed, I approve your resolution of

remaining at home, Adellé," said Monsieur; "for I have observed, that of late dancing has not agreed with you." "The Signora will not be surprised when she hears that," said Madamoiselle; "for she was remarking this morning how little I appeared calculated to enter into the gay scenes of the world, and was advising me to retire into a convent, which, indeed, I have had serious thoughts of myself; and was it not for my anxious solicitude respecting Louis, whose *volatile* turn of mind, and juvenile indiscretions, so often call for a monitor, I think I should; but I have promised him that I will wait till that youthful effervescence has subsided, before I put my plan in execution, and that promise, Louis, you know I hold sacred." "You are at perfect liberty, I assure you, Adellé," replied Delaborde, "to revoke it whenever you think proper; not that I remember any such promise having yet passed your lips, and as it has rested

with yourself, it is surely revocable."—"True," said she, "yet, have I not watched your *infant* steps, and to desert you now, when you never more required my guardianship, would be cruel indeed. No, Louis, I see the idea of it overpowers you, and I will promise to think of the convent no more." Madamoiselle then ran towards the house, where the party separated to dress for dinner.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

" The child of misery baptiz'd in tears."

As Jessica was sat in the afternoon, she found herself much indisposed, and motioning to Madamoiselle, she accompanied her to her apartment. Monsieur instantly dispatched two servants to Montpelier for the surgeon and nurse engaged to attend the Signora; and on the evening of that day the young stranger first saw the light. " Poor infant," said Jessica, as they presented her child to her, " thou art indeed opening thy eyes to the miseries of this world;" she kissed her son, and affectionately pressed him to her bosom.

"Thou hast no father," said she, "to bid thee welcome," whilst the tears trickled down her face; "and I must doubly cherish thee."

Madamoiselle was delighted to see Jessica so well after her severe conflict. "Now," said she, as she took her hand and pressed it to her lips, "the care of your babe I leave to the nurse; but that of the Signora must devolve upon me. I have apprised my father and Louis, that I shall not have it in my power to see or converse with them, except for a few moments, for some days. I found it necessary to prepare them for my absence, knowing how very keenly Louis, in particular, would feel it. But as soon as nurse thinks it can be done with safety to the little Signor, the sight of him below would be quite a treat.

"There is my dear old Philip so impatient to see him, and so overjoyed to hear of your safety, that he is more than half frantic; and my father and Louis,

who hardly ever saw a child in their lives, will be rejoiced beyond measure; dear, it will be such a nice plaything for Louis, and will divert him so much, that really, my dear Signora, I am very grateful for the favour you have done us."

Jessica smiled at this address, though her heart was aching under the sense of her misfortunes; she thought of Valdesa far away, perhaps regardless of her, and the sensation that oppressed her was too bitter to be endured. Madamoiselle conceived the source of her uneasiness, and was continually employed in endeavours to divert her mind; these were sometimes, however, wholly ineffectual, and with a look of patient resignation would Jessica calmly contemplate her infant son. A week after her confinement Madamoiselle got permission of the nurse to take him down stairs, where she presented him to her father and brother, who had ordered a treat for the

servants on this occasion. And as old Philip, taking him from Madamoiselle, carried him all round to the servants, his long restrained tears burst forth.

"Had my dear old master," said he, "lived to have seen this day, it would have rejoiced his heart, for he loved my mistress as dearly as if she'd been his own child. Aye, and he liked the Signor too for that matter; but it was'nt a clever thing of the Signor, I must needs say, to shoot that English gentleman, and leave my mistress." Madamoiselle now returned to Jessica's apartment. "Well," said she, "the dear little boy has been vastly admired, and I think you will now have a rival in the house, a circumstance that I did not apprehend possible. I have not seen Louis look so animated of an age, and old Philip is half wild with joy." Jessica's thoughts now again glanced towards Valdesa, and she sighed deeply. "I wish," said she to Madamoiselle, "that Monsieur would

have the kindness to apply to one of the protestant ministers at Montpelier, to baptize my child, I know not the will of his father respecting him; but I conceive he would wish him to be educated in the tenets of your church; at all events there can be nothing improper in giving him a name, and should I die it would be a relief to my mind to pay the last tribute of that respect which I must ever feel for the memory of my paternal friend by bequeathing my son the name which he bore. And, oh!" continued she, as the tears poured down her face, "may he, whilst escaping the calamities, possess the virtues of that honoured man."

Jessica laid her head on the pillow and seemed endeavouring to compose her mind. Madamoiselle left her for a few minutes to communicate her wishes to Monsieur; he immediately dispatched a messenger, and in the evening the clergyman arrived, who baptised the infant by the name of "Hanbury." As

Jessica received him from the arms of Madamoiselle, she gazed at him and kissing his cheek, "return to the bosom of thy mother," then added she, "yet more endeared to her by the name which thou bearest; thou knowest not yet the virtues that adorn, and which rendered it so valuable to her, the time may yet arrive when thou wilt be sensible of all its excellencies." Jessica's recovery was lingering, and her anxiety respecting her husband daily augmented. A month had nearly elapsed since her confinement, and still no tidings from him reached her; she had got into the drawing-room again to the great delight of the family, and little Hanbury was the pet of the whole house. Every day brought with it some added proof of their esteem for her in those delicate attentions which they paid her; this was balm to her wounded mind, and if any circumstance would have yielded consolation, those flattering

marks of kindness would have done so; but Jessica was severed from the object dearest to her heart, and these were only lesser comforts.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Hopeless sorrow o'er his face
Breath'd a melancholy grace,
And fix'd on every feature there
The mournful resignation of despair.

MONTGOMERY.

JESSICA expressed her desire to go to Montpelier, to offer up her thanks for her recovery, and Madamoiselle accompanied her there. As they were leaving the English chapel, faint with fatigue, Jessica found herself unable to proceed, and she was standing leaning on the arm of Madamoiselle whilst the carriage was drawn up; when the gentleman whom she had before remarked was passing, and, attracted by the languid

appearance of the Signora, stopped. Madamoiselle now addressed him, saying that the lady was much indisposed, and they were waiting the arrival of the carriage, which she would esteem his endeavouring to procure for them a particular favor. Jessica now appeared much worse, and a cold shivering fit succeeded to the languor which had oppressed her. "I have a carriage," said the old gentleman, "now waiting for me, and I shall feel happy in your making use of it; but the lady does not seem sufficiently recovered to bear the motion of a carriage for any length of way, and my lodgings are only a few doors from hence, and there, if she will rest for a short time, I hope she will soon revive. The carriage was now drawn up, and Madamoiselle prevailed with Jessica to accept the stranger's invitation. She continued extremely ill, and they were anxions to procure some medical assistance. The gentleman sent his servant in quest of

a physician, and Madamoiselle dispatched her's with a message to her father. As Jessica, pale and languid, was laid on the sopha, Madamoiselle observed the emotion of the stranger; the tear started from his eye, as he regarded her with compassionate looks, and frequently enquired how she found herself; he seemed uneasy and abstracted, and sighed often and deeply. Madamoiselle was much struck with the air of elegance conspicuous in his manner and conversation.

The stranger seemed, from his appearance, about the age of Monsieur Delaborde, but sorrow, she feared, had implanted wrinkles before their time; there was a gloomy sadness in the expression of his face, and a keen penetrating glance from his dark eye, that gave Madamoiselle an uneasy sensation, as she observed him walking silently and slowly across the apartment.

"My father," said Madamoiselle, "will, I am certain, be happy in an op-

portunity of expressing his sense of your kindness to us, and I feel particularly anxious for his arrival, that he may acknowledge those attentions." "The services of humanity my young lady," said the stranger, "demand no gratitude, and are a small part of what we all owe to the Father of the Universe."

There was something very singular in this last address, and Madamoiselle hesitated for a reply. She now turned to Jessica, who made a motion to rise, and the stranger hastened to support her. The physician who attended Mr. Hanbury arrived, and he then quitted the room.

Madamoiselle enquired of the physician if he was acquainted with the name of their host, and he replied in the negative.

"I am seldom," said he, "conversant with the names of strangers here, unless they apply to me in my medical capacity; but I recollect the gentle-

man's face." As he was saying this the stranger returned to the room, and the party conversed on general subjects.

When Madamoiselle had retired to the window, the physician followed her, and lowering his voice enquired if the Signora had lately heard from her husband.

Madamoiselle replied that she had not.

"He may now," continued he, "return here with perfect safety, since his antagonist has completely recovered, and has, I believe, already left this place, a circumstance that will, I trust, relieve the Signora's anxiety."

Before Madamoiselle could reply, she was struck with the countenance of the stranger, who had gathered part of the last sentence, and cast on Jessica a look, in which pity and curiosity were combined; he rose from his seat, and paced the room with unequal step, sometimes stopping as if lost in reflection, and then hurrying on in excessive agitation.

Monsieur Delaborde a few minutes after arrived, and the physician took his leave, promising to see Jessica in the evening, and giving her permission to return to Monsieur Delaborde's house, which the party were now anxious to do.

Monsieur Delaborde expressed his warm sense of the stranger's hospitable and humane attentions to the Signora and his daughter, and assured him that it would afford him infinite pleasure to have an opportunity of repeating his acknowledgments under his own roof.

To this proposal, however, the stranger seemed averse. "I am not fitted," said he, "for society, I have none of the requisites which could render my company an acquisition, and am alike incapable of imparting or receiving pleasure.

"Though I feel grateful that this day has brought with it the power of being servicable to you and your's; trifling indeed are the benefits which we can ren-

der each other, in compensation for the injuries that we inflict."

Monsieur Delaborde did not know how to receive this singular address, or what to think of the speaker; he once more however repeated his thanks, and the party returned home; on their road they conversed on this strange occurrence, and Jessica mentioned that this gentleman was the same whom she had so often seen.

"There is certainly something very odd about him," said Madamoiselle, "and I feel particularly anxious to know more of him." On their arrival Louis, who had been suffering much anxiety on Jessica's account, came to the carriage to enquire after her health, and was agreeably surprised to find her seated in it.

"Do not detain me a moment," said Madamoiselle, "I must run and see my little Hanbury, and tell him that I've brought his mama home safe."

Delaborde now supported Jessica from

the carriage to the house, and Madamoiselle in a few minutes returned to the room.

"We have had a most striking adventure," said she, "this morning;" and then repeated the scene at the lodgings of the stranger. "There is an air of mystery," added she, "hangs over him, that interests me highly, and I have no doubt that he will turn out to be a nobleman in disguise, who perhaps, a martyr to the passion of love, has retired from society, and I think his rejecting our company is a certain proof of wounded sensibility, not wishing a second time to expose himself to the power of female attractions."

"But how that it," said Delaborde, "have you given him an invitation, which he slights?" "My father did," said she, "but he has since thought that it was very injudicious." "Why so," interrogated Louis.

"For this reason; he considered as

we were returning, that he ought to have employed you on the occasion, for Louis, say's my father, has an insinuating manner which no person can withstand; now, as I agree with him perfectly in that sentiment, I think you had better call on this old gentleman yourself."

"I did not understand," replied Delaborde, "that he was an old man." "Oh, no," said Madamoiselle, "not very old, only of an interesting age, between sixty and seventy." In this manner did Madamoiselle amuse her auditors until dinner, after which Jessica, faint and languid, retired to her own room.

CHAPTER L.

"And who is he whose grief bears such
An emphasis?"

The following morning, as Jessica was sat on the sopha, her infant on her knee, Madamoiselle entered the room.

"Do you know," said she, "I believe I have discovered who the gentleman is, whose attentions yesterday so much gratified us all. Louis says, that from our description, he is certain it is the same who was so solicitous in his inquiries after the Signor the morning of the rencontre; that he goes about visiting all the prisons, and relieving those in distress."

"I am happy," said Jessica, "to find that his life is devoted to purposes so benevolent."

"Yet why," said Madamoiselle, "should that exclude him from entering into company? the contemplation of human woe cannot always be a proper picture for the mind to dwell upon; at least, I know that mine would soon be in a deranged state, if I spent every hour of my life with the wretched inhabitants of prisons, the dying, and the dead."

"But perhaps," said Jessica, "it might interfere with his plans to mix in the gaieties of the world, and absorb too large a portion of his time."

"He might, I think," interrupted Madamoiselle, "afford to dedicate a little of that to innocent amusements, for Louis is informed that he rises when those around him are retiring to their beds."

"Be assured however," said Jessica,

" that if his disposition be such as I should suppose it, he has more real gratification in this appropriation of time and money, than any other would afford. 'Tis a false and sickly sensibility which revels in fancied misery, but shrinks from the sight of real calamity, a kind of speculative virtue, that floats on the imagination without affecting the heart, and which our *modern* mode of education is too much calculated to engender. How many absent themselves from scenes of distress, because they imagine they are too *finely* organized to support the feelings which those would occasion, whilst they can bear to sit and weep over the fictitious miseries of some fair heroine.

" It was a remark of my poor friend, Mr. Hanbury's, that we could not too early be accustomed to scenes of a melancholy kind; there is an elasticity, he would say, in the mind of youth, which prevents their taking too deep an im-

pression so as to depress the mind, or render it unfit for the reception of gayer objects, but they soften the heart, moderate its passions, and awaken its feelings for the sorrows of humanity."

"I perfectly agree with you in your observation," said Madamoiselle, "but remember what the wise man of the east tells us, that there is a time for all things, and a season for every purpose under the heavens.

"But this," looking at her watch, "I am myself forgetting, for I ought to have been with my girls an hour since."

"If you find yourself at all ennuied I will send Louis to bear you company whilst I return; when I find that I am inclined to melancholy, I always seek out the most vivacious companion I can find, and you know his powers of conversation; so I will send him in, adieu," and kissing the child, Madamoiselle left the room.

A short time after she was gone, Monsieur and Delaborde entered; the latter informed Jessica that he had just received a message from her new acquaintance, requesting to be informed of her health. "I thought," added he, "to have punished him for his obstinacy in declining visiting us by not answering his enquiries."

"That," replied Monsieur Delaborde, "would have been a very ungrateful return for his kind attentions of yesterday, and I suppose he has good reasons for absenting himself from society. We should always be apprized of the motive before we sit in judgment on the action; from this illiberal mode of pronouncing, some of the best characters I have ever known have been the most freely censured.

"It is the intention that constitutes the crime; of that we cannot judge."

"I rather conceive," said Delaborde,

" that this stranger is very unhappy in himself, and of course not inclined to society, for I never yet knew a man who was labouring under mental suffering, induced either by his own follies and misfortunes, or those of others, that felt much in love with the world; either he avoids it from the consciousness that it can add nothing to his comfort, or because he supposes it has done him some injury; 'tis the natural consequence of misery to become misanthropical."

" But that," said Jessica, " I should suppose is not the stranger's character from Madamoiselle's account of him, for the conclusion I drew from that was quite opposite. Philanthropy I should imagine the leading trait in his disposition."

" Yes, so far as relieving the wants of his fellow-creatures," replied Delaborde, " for in that I understand he is particularly distinguished, but this he

perhaps conceives to be a duty that he owes to himself, and to that Providence which has blessed him with the means; that is a sort of benevolence that may exist even in the bosom of a misanthrope; an abstract feeling, which has nothing to do with universal good will."

"That is rather the observation of a cynic, Louis," said Monsieur; "I confess I feel great admiration for a character so uncommon, and the account which we have heard of the stranger heightens my desire for the enjoyment which he denies us; that he is an unhappy man I agree with you in supposing, and I lament that circumstance more from believing that he cannot have deserved to be so."

"Then you do not suppose it possible that his virtues are the fruit of repentance," replied Delaborde, "now I conceive it to be highly so, and should

not be surprised to learn that his misery was the offspring of guilt."

"But till we are acquainted with that circumstance," said Monsieur, "it will do more honour to our hearts to believe the contrary."

Madamoiselle Delaborde now made her appearance. "Well," said she, "how have you amused yourselves in my absence?" Jessica then informed her that the stranger had sent to enquire after them.

"Oh, that is just what I expected from him," said Madamoiselle, "the very quintescence of politeness; depend on it he is some banished nobleman, who seeks, in a separation from his cruel mistress, an oblivion of his cares. I dare say he longs to breathe forth his sorrows to some amiable confidante, and wishes most likely to make choice of me. He has no doubt been struck with my pensive countenance, and reflection has since convinced him that he would

meet in me a sympathizing friend. Amiable and unfortunate youth! how I long to be acquainted with the history of his loves."

Jessica could not help smiling at this ludicrous speech of Madamoiselle's.

"Our conjectures on this head," said Monsieur, "seem very different, and perhaps all wide from the truth, though your's, Adellé, is certainly the most improbable, for I should imagine the gentleman had outlived the season of that passion for many years."

"Oh, I believe," said Madamoiselle, "there is no affixing bounds to an involuntary sensation. You know you confessed yourself very much in love with the Signora the first time you saw her, and the stranger does not appear quite so old as you."

Monsieur laughed at his daughter.

"I always conclude," said she, "when I see any person particularly unhappy, that they are labouring under

that fatal passion; but I believe you have all conversed on the subject till you have forgot that it is near the hour of dinner, and as hunger is certainly a very powerful sensation with me at present, I wish to remind you of it."

The party now separated, and retired to their different apartments till dinner was announced.

CHAPTER LI.

I tremble at that in which I once triumphed,
I blush at that of which I once was vain;
Oh *pleasure! pleasure!* what art thou? The
Death of reason. And with reason
Dies the whole heaven as well as character
Of man.—

Centaur not Fabulous.
YOUNG.

WE now return to Nice, where we left Charles Greville immersed in the difficulties attendant on a life of unbounded dissipation. Lady Selwyn had returned to England, and with her the niece who has been already spoken of, and who was happily relieved from

Charles's snares by the exposure of his criminality.

His dependence on Lady Selwyn at an end, a prosecution against him already commenced, his resources exhausted, and his health destroyed by vicious excess, he exhibited a melancholy proof of the influence of bad passions on the human heart.

To recruit his worn out finances, he had again recourse to the gaming table, but that did not extend to him its aid, and the last extremity to which Charles was driven, was a matrimonial project with a lady whom he met at Nice, and who was old enough to have been his mother; selfish and unprincipled, void of the feelings of affection, he sacrificed no part of his comfort in the idea of this union.

The lady had wealth, unaccompanied by prudence, or she would not have bestowed it upon him, and weak as the most artful of her associates could have

wished her, she was perhaps, of all others, the wife whom he would have chosen. Her income was however only a jointure left her by her late husband, and at her death would devolve to his family; but Charles's situation was critical, and there was no time for deliberation; she accepted of his hand, and they were married.

Soon however Charles threw aside the mask, and his wife saw, when too late, the folly into which she had been betrayed. He returned with new avidity to those scenes of dissipation, from which he had lately by necessity been restrained, and he did not even assume that appearance of affection which common decency demanded.

She was forsaken for the most abandoned of her sex, whilst her fortune was made subservient to his vices.

She complained, remonstrated, even sometimes threatened, but none of these

methods had any effect on Charles's mind, 'twas long since expostulation had ceased to have any power over him, and he never listened to entreaties that interfered with his interest or pleasure.

His progress from one excess to another had been very gradual, and every day advanced him on his road to villainy; this last proceeding seemed to have given the finishing stroke to his character. His wife, whose injuries had become the universal topic, was ridiculed, condemned, but by all pitied.

Charles had commenced an acquaintance with an Italian opera singer, who appeared to have every inclination to make him suffer for his gallantries, by draining him of large sums, which she lavished on her favourites; and whilst she exercised that tyranny towards him, which he practised on his unfortunate wife, was secretly ridiculing him

for being so much the dupe of her artifices.

Jessica's letters Charles had never received; with the death of Mr. Hanbury and his sister's marriage he was of course unacquainted.

To have exposed himself to the scrutiny of Mr. Hanbury, whose life had been spent in one course of upright integrity and undeviating honour, he had yet sufficient sense of shame to shrink from, and perhaps the knowledge of his death would have been to Charles a matter of rejoicing, since it precluded the idea of his being made privy to his vices.

That was one reason by which Charles was withheld from returning to England. The fear of encountering Mr. Hanbury on his arrival there filled him with shame; he was fully conscious in what a despicable light his conduct must appear.

One night, on returning from the gaming table at a late hour, Charles found his wife in the drawing room, where he had left her, awaiting his arrival; he had lost, and his temper from that circumstance was more than commonly savage. He roughly interrogated her on his entrance as to the cause of her being there at that late hour; she fearfully replied, "that she did not feel any inclination towards sleep, and had been endeavouring to beguile the time by reading till his return."

"If you waited here," said Charles, "to be a spy on my actions, I would advise you, Madam, to seek some scheme which promises greater success, and I command you to retire to your chamber, for your presence does not afford the smallest satisfaction to me, and will be no restraint on my actions, either now or at any future period."

Mrs. Greville burst into tears, and was preparing to leave the room in obedience to his commands, when on rising from her seat her foot slipped, and she fell against the corner of a marble table with great violence. The blood now streamed from her forehead, and, faint with the pain which the wound occasioned, she entreated him to ring the bell; a servant appeared to support her to her apartment, and, throwing the door to with a loud clap, Charles flew out of the room.

Mrs. Greville was many days before she could use the least exertion whatever, or scarcely move from the bed; during that time Charles once made her a formal visit for a few moments, and then left her to her unhappy reflections.

He was now called upon to prepare himself for the charges which

Lord Selwyn had brought against him, and, necessitated to go over to England, he determined to free himself from his present incumbrance by leaving his wife at Nice. Charles began however to feel the horrors of his situation, when he seriously reflected into whose power he had committed himself.

Lord Selwyn was a man of splendid fortune, added to the consequence that a title gave him. He had secured on his side the most able counsellors; and what was yet more in his favour, his was the side of truth.

Charles had no one advantage to counterbalance these, and he well knew that he must be foil'd in an attempt to defend his cause against so powerful an opponent.

The time had however arrived when he was obliged to prepare for

the best defence he could make; and leaving his unfortunate wife to repent the folly of her choice, he hastened to England.

CHAPTER LII.

When love's well tim'd, 'tis not a fault to love,
The strong, the brave, the virtuous and the wise,
Sink in the soft captivity together;
I would not urge thee to dismiss thy passion,
(I know 'twere vain) but to suppress it's force
Till better times may make it look more graceful.

ADDISON.

EMILIE with the Chevalier had quit-the castle, and, after some deliberation, determined to take their course along the borders of the Venetian territories. Emilie was more than ever anxious to arrive at some place where she could securely rest, being in hourly fear that the Marchese on discovering her flight would immediately pursue her, and feeling her present situation uncomfortable

from having no female companion; fatigued by a mode of travelling to which she was unaccustomed, and her mind, notwithstanding it's unshaken fortitude, sometimes unusually depressed at the prospect before her; Emilie spoke little, and the Chevalier seemed to have imbibed some part of her disposition to silence.

On the third day of their journey they arrived at a small village, near which was a convent that seemed, from it's situation and the account which the travellers received of the abbess, to promise Emilie protection. She was not now in a state to pursue her route, and she expressed to the Chevalier her desire of resting there.

He made particular enquiries at the small place where they alighted, if there was any probability of the Signora's being accomodated; he found, however, that there was not, and determined if possible to gain for her a reception at the convent.

He engaged a person to make the application, saying that a lady had arrived in the village, who was too much indisposed to continue her journey, and that if the abbess would admit her to the convent, she would feel very grateful.

A kind answer was returned in the affirmative, and Emilie prepared for her departure. She would not, however, accept the services of the Chevalier in accompanying her there, fearing that unpleasant constructions might be placed on the circumstance; but conducted by the man whom he had sent to make the application for her, Emilie set out for the convent.

As she slowly and sadly followed her guide, through the avenue which led to that ancient gothic building, her thoughts reverted to the melancholy of her situation; she had escaped from one evil, and though she trusted none greater could now await her, yet her forlorn and desolate lot filled her with sorrowful fore-

bodings. The gloom of evening had thrown over the objects which were presented to her it's sober mantle, and as the breezes shook the lofty branches of the trees under whose canopy she passed, the bell at the convent which at intervals sounded on her ear, seemed "flinging to the gale it's sullen sound."

On her approach towards the convent, Emilie saw at a distance the sisters preparing to vespers. They were crossing the court, and appeared, in the uncertain light in which she contemplated the procession, to be a numerous assemblage.

"Here then," said she, "I may surely rest from the blasts which have shook my repose; yet, doubtless, there exists many here who have borne the "pelting of the pitiless storm," and seek with me a refuge in these hollowed walls." Emilie dismissed her attendant at the porch of the abbey, and requested he

would inform the Chevalier that she should see him in the morning.

She was shewn by the porteress into a room, where she informed Emilie that the abbess would wait upon her as soon as vespers were finished.

Emilie felt happy in this short respite, for something of a sensation nearly amounting to fear lurked at her heart on the prospect of this interview, and she endeavoured to calm her mind by recalling to it the recollection of what she had encountered on more trying occasions.

These fears were dispelled when the door was opened, and the abbess entered. She appeared to be near seventy years of age, from the furrows which time had implanted in her face, yet there was a dignified uprightness in her mode of walking that seemed to contradict that appearance; her voice when she spoke was music itself, and her manner, as she gracefully extended her hand to

Emilie, that of a being who could deeply feel for and tenderly cherish the unfortunate; it seemed to say, rest here and be comforted. Encouraged by the mild benignity of her address, Emilie disclosed to her the calamities of her situation, in which she compassionately sympathized.

The countenance of the poor wanderer was indeed an ample corroboration of her sufferings, they required no further evidence, and it was a principle with the abbess to believe her fellow creatures deserving, till she discovered them to be otherwise.

"I should ill merit," said Emilie, addressing her, "the generous protection that you have so kindly promised me, if I did not candidly reveal to you the particulars of my present unhappy situation." Emilie than entered into a brief account of all that had befallen her since she quitted the castle.

"In receiving me then," said she,

"into your little society, I am proud to say that you do not harbour a being rendered miserable by error or imprudence:" her voice faltered, and the abbess taking her hand, assured her that she gave to her account implicit credit; that she warmly recommended her conduct in wishing for the present to separate from the Chevalier: "And rest assured," added she, "that you shall here meet with every support which a virtuous cause demands; your fortitude hitherto I admire, and your seeking a refuge from the world under these circumstances encreases my respect; I have lived long in it, have had many opportunities of observing the instability of all it's possessions, unaccompanied by virtue; happiness is seated in the mind, it is there alone that we must look for comfort; you will find numbers within these walls who are enjoying the purest blessings of contentment, and many, I am sorry to say, who are suffering deeply.

"In this uncertain state, where every thing is liable to change, we cannot all be happy, it is not in our power, but the power is granted us of deserving to be so; I trust you will never lose sight of that. And now, my daughter, you have travelled far to day, and must require both refreshment and rest;" and ringing the bell, the abbess desired one of the sisters to attend Emilie to the refectory, where after taking some repast, she retired to the room alloted her.

It was a fine moon-light night, and Emilie opened the casement of her little chamber to take a survey of the scenery around her. The gardens of the abbey, over which she threw her eye, seemed very extensive, and were terminated by the sea, whose undulating waves, washing their borders, gave a picturesque appearance to the scene.

She stood at the window for some moments contemplating the prospect, till roused from her reverie by a deep sigh,

which seemed to proceed from some one near her, she started, and for a short time felt a sensation like fear, and closing the casement retired to bed.

In the morning Emilie paid her respects to the abbess, who introduced her to the little community, and then left her to prepare for her approaching interview with the Chevalier, whom she was to meet, perhaps for the last time, since they had agreed to separate until a happier day; that day might be far distant, might never be in store for the them.

"Yet I rest firm," Emilie would say, "in my opinion of his unshaken integrity; he will not suffer any other impression to weaken his affection for me, or gain an ascendancy over his heart; with this reliance on his rectitude of principle will my drooping mind comfort and console itself."

In a few minutes after the Chevalier made his appearance, and Emilie found,

under a wish of disguising his feelings, that they were no less poignant than her own.

She mentioned to him how much she had been gratified the preceding night, by the reception which the lady abbess had given her, and her opinion of that apparently estimable woman.

The Chevalier did not, however, seem so entirely satisfied, and would perhaps have been more soothed by hearing a less flattering account.

" I foresee," said he, " the consequences which will ultimately ensue from your prejudice in favor of the abbess; she will gain an influence over you so powerful as to induce you to take the veil." " And is your opinion," replied Emilie, " such as to lead you to suppose that any arguments on this subject would have weight with me, after my decided resolution to the contrary? You are not yet I find thoroughly acquainted with my character, or you wolud not thus doubt it's firmness.

"I have candidly informed the abbess on what terms I solicited a reception at the convent. She applauds our determination of separating till happier prospects awaits us, and would not, I am certain from the little I have seen of her, urge me to any step which would interfere with your prior claims."

The Chevalier now appeared more calm, but yet wanted resolution to depart; he rose from his seat, then recollected something that he had omitted to say, and seemed anxious to lengthen the period of their interview.

After passing two hours with her, Emilie, however, reminded him of the length of his visit, which she feared might give offence, and unwilling to subject her to unpleasant conjectures, to which a further continuance in her society might give rise, the Chevalier prepared to bid Emilie farewell.

"Forgive me then," he added, as he took her hand and pressed it to his lips,

"if I again urge you to keep in view your resolution of not being swayed by any advice that may be offered you on a subject which I so much deprecate; I trust that I may be prosperous in those exertions which, animated by my hope of returning to you, I shall so chearfully make, and that when this dark cloud shall be dispersed, the evening of our days may yet be spent in peaceful serenity."

Emilie promised the Chevalier that she would wait for that period, hoping and trusting that it might soon arrive. The Chevalier, after receiving her assurances, with faultering voice and agitated manner, uttered his farewell, and tore himself from her.

CHAPTER LIII.

> The tear was on her cheek;
> The sigh rose in secret in her bosom.
>
> OSSIAN.

EMILIE certainly experienced many pangs on her separation from the Chevalier, yet she yielded not to vain lamentation, but endeavoured to exert herself for the benefit of those around her.

With the abbess she hourly encreased in favour, a circumstance that sometimes brought sensations of pain along with the pleasure that it gave her.

The sisters saw the distinction with which Emilie was treated, and they did

not all possess minds sufficiently liberal to confess that she merited it.

The present superior had only lately come into power, her predecessor having been suddenly called away by death, and though she was infinitely more beloved in the community, yet whenever she had bestowed any particular mark of regard on Emilie, the nuns seemed to have peculiar pleasure in descanting to her on the virtues of their late abbess.

This did not, however, lessen Emilie's respect for the merits of her friend; for such she proudly called her, and was never more sensibly gratified than when that amiable woman would employ her in any little office belonging exclusively to her own service.

Emilie had been hitherto wholly unaccustomed to female society, above the rank of poor old Agnes, and now to have an opportunity of uttering freely those sentiments which in solitude she

had imbibed, to receive the smile of assent, or the look of approbation from a valued friend, was a luxury that seemed to repay her for every previous suffering.

"Why!" she would exclaim in these moments, when her heart swelling with gratitude was longing to pour forth its feelings to this benevolent woman, "Why did I ever term myself unfortunate; happy let me rather consider my lot, since it has led me to the asylum which, by the virtues of one kind being, is rendered the abode of peace."

The abbess indeed merited all the encomiums which her most partial friend could lavish; firm in the line of duty, unshaken in the path of friendship, her heart the seat of each generous principle, her mind stored with every possession which could render her happy in herself, and the cause of happiness to others, her time dovoted to the service of her fellow-creatures, her faculties employed

solely for their welfare, such was the being to whom Providence had directed the wanderings of her guest.

Emilie was not confined to the rules of the convent, though she did not wish to stray beyond them; her health was not, however, in a state to bear close confinement, and at the request of the abbess she took her daily walk.

Seated by the sea-side, and sunk in a contemplation of the beauties around her, Emilie passed many hours together; "she marked the ebbing of the boundless tide," and thought on the vicissitudes of man, as she listened to the monotonous note of the sea-bird, its wild and piercing cry, and beheld the storm gathering around her, the dark clouds hovering over the ocean; she was thankful that she had secured a refuge from the storms of life, and when her eye glanced towards the possibility of the Marchese's discovering her abode, she endeavoured to dismiss her fears. The

image of the Chevalier would frequently present itself, and never an unwelcome inmate. In her mind's eye Emilie constantly dwelt with him, and meditated on his character with secret satisfaction, she had there seen much to approve and little to condemn; and to recall him whilst absent to her view seemed a tribute due to his merits.

One evening on returning from her solitary ramble, the abbess, on meeting Emilie in the hall, expressed her regret that she had been absent.

"Sister Paulina," said she, "has been very ill, and wished much to have seen you."

Emilie lamented that she had walked out. "But I will go to her this moment if you will permit me," she replied.

"Do then," said the abbess, "and inform her that it is my intention to visit her again this evening."

Sister Paulina was one of that com-

munity who had particularly interested Emilie from her entrance into the convent.

There was a look of patient sweetness, a mild resignation in her blue eyes, oftener cast down in sorrowful abstraction than employed in watching the conduct of the sisters, which was too much the case with the majority of them, that had struck Emilie and excited her wonder.

Paulina was a general favourite, for she behaved to all around her with the same unvarying softness and good will.

Emilie had marked the tear on her cheek, and her efforts to suppress it, and she sought, by every little kindness in her power, to alleviate what she too evidently suffered.

It was a rule with the abbess never to enter into the history of those under her roof to any individual there; to her each member of the society safely communicated; they had her best wishes,

and could command her best advice, and all their secrets rested secure in her bosom.

Emilie had therefore been restrained by delicacy from making any comment on the appearance of sister Paulina, nor had she heard of any circumstance respecting her, except that she was frequently low spirited, and avoided mixing in the company of the sisters.

On going into Paulina's room Emilie found her seated on the bed, her head rested on her hand; she had been at prayers, and was now preparing to go to rest.

" I am sorry," said Emilie, " that I was so unfortunate as to have walked out when you did me the favour of sending to me.

" How are you, my dear madam, and what can I do for you?"

Emilie then repeated the message which the abbess had given her.

" You are very kind," said Paulina,

"in obeying so soon my summons;" and holding out her hand, "I should not have sent to you," said she, "but that I know you are kind, compassionate, and deserving of the friendship with which our dear abbess honours you, and I felt as if a little of your society would do me good."

Paulina paused, her voice became faint, and Emilie then saw how very weak and languid she had become since their last interview.

The glimmering rays of twilight were faintly thrown across the chamber, and the figure of Paulina, as she leaned on the bed, her eyes raised to heaven in calm resignation, seemed but the poor remains of beauty once admired.

Emilie sat contemplating the objects before her, whilst these thoughts dwelt in her mind.

Paulina grasped more closely the hand which held her's, and appeared to suffer violent pain.

"Had I not better inform the abbess," said Emilie, "of your encreased indisposition; for indeed I am very unhappy to see you thus?"

"No," replied Paulina, "she will visit me at her own time, we will not disturb her, you know how many claims she has upon her, and how amply every hour by her is occupied in attendance on the sick or afflicted.

"All care respecting me will soon end; I shall ere long, I trust, have done with the things of this troublesome world; rejoice in Paulina's release from a life that has been endured, not enjoyed. I was happy till my felicity was poisoned by man, since then I have been as you now see me."

Emilie felt much on this observation. "I have many things," continued she, "to say to you. When you came within these walls I saw your youth, your innocence, and have frequently admired the propriety of your actions, and the

deference which you pay to the opinions of our abbess; it is not extraordinay that these traits in your character should have excited my esteem, and I determined, when some favourable moment should occur, to make you acquainted with the story of my sufferings.

"You may learn something from it both as instruction and warning; but I am not equal to the recital at present. To-morrow evening, if you will visit my cell at the same hour, and I feel myself adequate to the task, the narrative shall be your's."

Emilie assured her that she thought herself much honoured by so distinguished a proof of her confidence, and after assisting her to undress retired.

After she had seated herself in her chamber, which was next to that of Paulina, the remark of the abbess, on their first interview, that many within those walls were, she feared, suffering deeply, occurred to Emilie's mind, and

she felt very anxious to learn the events connected with the life of Paulina, which she had promised to unfold.

Emilie now prepared herself for rest, but was unable to sleep; the interview which had passed that evening awakened sensations of pleasure and pain. That Paulina had any thing to disclose of a sorrowful nature was a circumstance that filled Emilie with regret, though she certainly experienced much gratification in being thought worthy of receiving her confidence.

In the morning on going down she found, to her great joy, that Paulina was considerably better. The abbess had been with her for some time, and informed Emilie that she had now fallen asleep.

The hours, however, seemed tedious in their progress till evening arrived, when the expected recital was to take place.

Emilie wandered out to her favourite seat by the sea side. The evening was gloomy and the wind whistled around her.

The dead calm that reigned in the gardens of the convent, where no footstep but her own interrupted the profound stillness of the scene, was only broke into by the dashing of the waves, and at intervals the melancholy note of the fisherman who was collecting his nets together, after the labours of the day.

Her own reflections were of a pensive kind, in unison with the scene before her, as she leaned against the wall listening to the fisherman's plaintive song; it was a lament on some occasion, where a lover had been deserted by his mistress, who had united herself to one more blest with the gifts of fortune. The language of his complaint was natural, simple, eloquent, and had lost

nothing of the expression from the manner in which it was sung. As Emilie's thoughts glanced towards the Chevalier the tear stole down her cheek, and whilst seated on the fragment of a rock the following lines occurred to her:—

Thy blasts cold winter o'er the plains descend,
  And as I joyless mark the evening ray;
My sighs are wafted to that absent friend,
  Banish'd from me and distant far away.
But not from my heart banish'd, tho' thy pow'r,
  Stern fortune, unrelenting bids us part;
Yet mem'ry in this lonely cheerless hour,
  Brings his lov'd image to my sadden'd heart,
Mem'ry thy charms can yet some comfort give
  To their consoling influence much I owe;
Departed scenes in fond remembrance live,
  And yield that bliss the present ne'er bestow.
Hope's soothing voice in accents mildly sweet,
  Would whisper years of happiness in store
For us, beloved friend, when we shall meet,
  And winter's cold and cheerless blasts are o'er.

Emilie rose from her seat and slowly returned to the convent, where she learned that Paulina had enquired for her.

CHAPTER LIV.

Be not to her frailty severe,
Nor take from her virtue its due,
For the vow of her lip was sincere,
And the sigh of her bosom was true.

ANON.

ON going to her chamber, Emilie found sister Paulina apparently better than the night preceding, though there was still the same air of languor about her, and she did not seem to entertain any idea of her own recovery.

She requested, after a pause of some moments, that Emilie would close the door, and struggling for composure she began. " In me you behold the last survivor of an unfortunate family, the

daughter of Signor Borghese, who was an honour to the race from which he sprung, and an ornament to that society in which he lived; but it was his misfortune to see his efforts blighted, and to witness the cruel demolition of all his hopes. His sons, the pride and pleasure of his life, perished, save one, in their country's cause. My mother survived not the event, and happy was it for her that she was rescued from the miseries that befel us. My youngest brother, now a sad remnant of our happier days, alone survived to tell the tale; he had supported his elder brother in his arms whilst he breathed his last, had counted another numbered with the slain, and had received the heart-rending intelligence that a third was no more. He returned to his father's house wounded in mind and body, only the wreck of what he once was. I marked the unshaken fortitude of my father, I saw him bow to the power

that afflicted him, and I daily beheld an instance of the influence of religion over the mind; yet there were moments when Carlini, animated with that zeal peculiar to the mind of a good soldier, was dwelling with enthusiasm on the scene of action, that fatal day which had robbed us of our comfort, and would mention inadvertently the gallant conduct of his brothers, that the tear would burst from the eye of my father, and he would then exclaim, alas, my poor boys! Carlini brought with him to my father's house a fellow-soldier, whose life he had saved by his humane exertion. I shall pass over the name of that being who has caused me so many pangs, suffice it to say that he was a man of rank, of accomplishments, of insinuating manners, and since a period of twenty-one years, it is not extraordinary that these circumstances should have made an impression on my heart."

Paulina paused, and after some mo-

ments added, " happy would it have been for me, had I escaped those attractions; I was then only fifteen years of age, many summers had not passed over my head before I met with the cruel despoiler; I was flattered, caressed, and admired by this man, and unable, from my youth and inexperience, to appreciate his character, I fondly confided in him.

" My father, owing to some secret cause, or perhaps from his superior penetration, early conceived a dislike to his guest, and would frequently express to Carlini those sentiments of disapprobation. There is something he would say about your friend uncongenial to me, he is too much the courtier to be sincere.

" These remarks often caused me pain, which I endeavoured most sedulously to conceal; I dared not avow an attachment that I well knew my father would so much disapprove. From my sad narra-

tive you will learn the necessity of openness, the danger of clandestine proceedings.

"The friend of my brother, by his unremitting attentions, was daily preparing the way for my subsequent misery; that misery was however accelerated by my own follies; and whilst recapitulating his crimes, I must not pass over my errors. Had I made my father privy to the attachment, how many hours of pain should I have spared myself, but not even to Carlini did I disclose my sentiments.

"I had entered into a promise to the contrary, and one imprudence precipitated me into another; the attachment was mutually carried on for many months unsuspected by any human being.

"We were now at a villa of my father's in the country, but the winter had commenced, and we returned to our town residence.

" Every hour my affection for the Signor increased, and with that my affliction ; I was no longer happy, because I had been hurried into a mode of conduct against which my reason revolted, I possessed no more that ingenuousness once my pride ; I shrunk at every glance from the eye of my father, his smiles were frowns to me, and every word of approbation was a dagger to my heart.

" I had been hitherto withheld from fear, I was now restrained by shame, and perhaps regard for his feelings had some share in the motives which kept me silent ; he believed his daughter yet retained those principles which it had been his study to inculcate. I would not discover to him the painful humiliating reality, and present her to him deprived of her best ornaments.

" In this state of conflicting emotions did I spend many months, sometimes resolving to make known my

attachment, and then weakly yielding to the arguments of the Signor; at length he proposed to me a private union, but from that idea I revolted.

"I declared to him my intention of remaining single until he could publicly avow his marriage; he spoke of relations whom he feared to offend, and on whom he was in some degree dependent.

"One evening as I sat alone in the saloon he entered it, and after some hesitation, "Paulina," he said, "I am come to bid you farewell, I must return to my own province, where affairs of moment call me."

"I felt much hurt on this intelligence, but assuming all the composure I could, "your departure from hence," I replied, "is I suppose a sudden thought, but wherever you go I sincerely wish you happy."

"My fortitude here failed me, and I burst into tears." "Why then," said

the Signor, " will you not consent, my Paulina, to a measure that will terminate those anxieties which I have long laboured under, and which, notwithstanding your efforts to conceal them, it is too evident you partake of." " I hesitated for reply, the thoughts of our separation had caused me many pangs, and seizing that moment to determine me in my compliance."

" I go from you," he added, " perhaps never to see you more, many unforeseen events may happen to exclude the possibility of return to you; some dark cloud may arise to overshadow our hopes, and you will then lament those weak scruples that have now gained an ascendancy over you."

" With these and similar arguments did the Signor lull my principles to sleep, and, unmindful of the duty I owed to a parent, kind, indulgent, bending beneath his afflictions, I promised to unite myself to the Signor previous to his departure.

"A sister of my father's, who resided some leagues from us, it was agreed that I should propose to visit, and we were then to embrace the opportunity of being united.

"Never shall I forget the evening previous to my departure; after obtaining the consent of my father to visit my aunt, he requested that I would hasten back to him, that he did not like the idea of a long separation.

"Carlini offered to accompany me, and at that moment the Signor entered; he mentioned, as if by accident, that he was recalled on business of some importance, and that he must be under the necessity of leaving us on the morrow.

"Carlini expressed his regret on this circumstance, but added he, "it is fortunate on one account, that you have fixed on that day for your departure, since Paulina is anxious to visit my aunt, whose house is situated on the

road to your province, and you will perhaps take charge of her on her journey, which will allow me an opportunity of remaining with my father."

"The Signor replied, though not without some embarrassment. I durst not raise my eyes fearing they might encounter those of my father, and only slightly bowed my head in return to the Signor's address.

"The evening was gliding fast away, yet I felt reluctant to retire, and my father twice reminded me of the lateness of the hour. I was to commence my journey early in the morning, and he wished me to have all the rest which the short space previous to my setting out admitted of. Alas! he knew not that I carried within my bosom those feelings that had long deprived me of repose.

"I went to my father at length, and throwing my arms around his neck, I bathed it with my tears. How I longed

at that moment to disclose to him all that I suffered, and to receive his forgiveness.

"This was the first separation we had experienced since those afflicting events of which I have informed you. I retired to my chamber where, wretched from the various sensations that oppressed me, my heart sought in bitter tears its relief."

CHAPTER LV.

There is a grief that cannot feel,
It leaves a wound that will not heal,
My heart grew cold, it felt not then,
When will it cease to feel again ?

MONTGOMERY.

"AT an early hour the following morning I quitted my paternal roof, as followed by Carlini, who accompanied me to the carriage; I descended the steps of that house where I had spent so many years of unalloyed felicity, till the few last fatal months had poisoned it's source.

"I cast a glance towards the window of the chamber where my father in peaceful security reposed. My parting from Carlini was affecting, I conjured

him to be kind, attentive to my father, until the period of my return; but I had suffered so deeply from the conflict of the night preceding, that I was incapable of feeling more; my heart had exhausted itself, the vessel was dry; and I could shed tears no longer.

"I threw myself back in the carriage, and remained nearly insensible, till roused by the voice of the Signor to my misery.

"We stopt at the chapel in the neighbourhood, and there I sealed my fate."

Paulina paused. "That hour," continued she, "was the one in which I completed the errors of my conduct, and opened a path to my subsequent calamities.

"I was the wife of the Signor, I had attained the object of all my anxieties, and yet I had rendered myself wretched, as the bitterest enemy could have wished me. We travelled slowly, for, exhausted by mental suffering, I was not

in a state to bear fatigue. One week only we passed together after our union.

" The Signor resigned me into the protection of my aunt; he returned to his own province, with the promise of writing to me immediately on his arrival, and disclosing to his and my family, as soon as circumstances would permit, his union with me.

" Torn from a husband in my bridal hour, compelled to bury in secret the anguish of my heart, where was the happiness I had sought in compensation for the comfors which I had cast from me? I looked in vain for that tranquillity which I feared could never more be mine.

" My meeting with my aunt was affectionate, and the grief which I ineffectually strove to hide was attributed by her to our recent calamities. She frequently spoke of my father, and my tears flowed at the mention of his name. On the virtues of my mother too, she

warmly descanted, and every encomium she uttered was an additional stab to my peace.

" You will be the comfort of your father's declining years," she once said, " a consolation to him for the misfortunes he has endured."

" What were my emotions on such unmerited praise, I felt ready to disclose my secret, and humble myself before her.

" I heard not of the Signor, and my dejection hourly encreased. My aunt observed this circumstance, and anxious to divert my mind from dwelling on it's sorrows, she proposed to accompany me, when I returned to the house of my father.

" This period at length arrived, and I summoned up all the fortitude I could command to encounter once more a meeting with that injured parent.

" When returning to my home, after a short absence in my earlier years, with

what joy did I anticipate the welcome that I should meet; I now felt like a banished outcast, because I was conscious that I deserved to be so.

"The affectionate looks of my brother entered into my heart, and the parental embrace of my father wrung me to agony.

"I could have flown to the most desolate abode, and in solitude passed my wretched life; it would have been luxury in comparison of what I daily suffered.

"Carlini soon after this period quitted us once more to raise the sword in defence of his country; I solicited my aunt to remain with us, and she yielded to my entreaties.

"Months elapsed, and no tidings of the Signor reached me. My father's health was daily declining, and my sufferings hourly augmented.

"Carlini's regiment were now in the neighbourhood of Venice, he frequently wrote to me. One morning whilst seated by my father as, after a restless night,

he was extended on the couch, the servant brought me a letter, which by the direction I found was from Carlini; after expressing his anxiety to hear of my father, and requesting that I would immediately write to relieve his fears, he added, "Our friend is in Venice, though I have seen little of him, for what reason I know not; he seems to avoid me, and I do not chuse to obtrude myself on his society.

"He is paying his court, it is said, to the daughter of the Conte Michelotti, who, I imagine, will inherit a splendid fortune, a circumstance which I should suppose will give her additional charms in his eyes, since he is ambitious to make a figure, and possesses only the patrimony of a younger brother."

"As I perused this part of the letter, a sudden faintness came over me; without uttering one word, I tottered to the door, where, after resting some moments, I reached my own room, and throwing

myself on my knees before the Father of the Universe, I poured out the anguish of my soul.

" My affection for my husband had borne down every barrier of gratitude, duty, and reason. Was this, then, the reward of all my anxious hours, the completion of vows made in the presence of a divine Being? I looked on every side, the prospect was misery. My brother, to whom I would have applied in this dreadful hour, I considered it might be death to make a party in my affairs; his nice sense of honour, I was too well convinced, would have led him to have rushed on the Signor, and insisted on his answering with the sword the demands of an injured sister.

" In this afflicting situation revolving various plans in my mind, did I linger on in misery from day to day.

" My father's illness encreased rapidly, and I requested my aunt would write to Carlini, entreating him if possible to

return to us; he obeyed her summons in a few days, and only in time to receive a parent's last benediction."

Here Paulina paused, and Emilie requested she would defer her narrative. "I fear," said she, "that you have already exhausted yourself, and dwelling on sufferings like your's must in your present state be very injurious." "Tomorrow evening then," said Paulina, "if you will visit my cell at the same hour, the sequel of my sad story shall be unfolded to you." Emilie, after affectionately embracing her, wished her good night, and descended to the parlour, where the abbess was seated.

CHAPTER LVI.

There is none can tell what I have suffer'd,
But I shall soon be where the weary rest,
And she did rest her soon, for it pleas'd God
To take her to his mercy.

SOUTHEY.

"You find me, my young friend," said the abbess, on Emilie's entering, "busied in a contemplation of that incessant change and vicissitude, which is ever attendant on human affairs; I am just returned from the chamber of death, where I have seen one of the sisters, who was yesterday in as perfect a state of health as she has been for some years, quietly resigned into the arms of death.

"Poor sister Mary, her life has been

virtuous, and her condition now truly to be envied."

"That is the sister then," said Emilie, "who was far advanced in years, and of whom I have heard much, in consequence of your kind and unremitting attentions to her.

"I well recollect her speaking of you, when I had first the pleasure of being introduced to your society, and the remark she made, which has frequently since occurred to my mind. "In the steadiness of her friendships," said she, "and the candour of her mind, our superior stands unrivalled." "I have often indeed since had occasion to observe the justice of the sentiment."

"Sister Mary," said the abbess, "from her disposition to gratitude was apt to magnify the services of friendship, and that must have been a strange heart to which her patient virtues, and sweetness of temper, could not have gained her access.

"But have you visited Paulina? I have been fearing that she would, and apparently with too much cause, accuse me of neglect in not having seen her to-day; but I intend this evening explaining to her the cause of my absence. I felt it would be a balm to my mind, though I could administer no relief to her, to stay by my poor friend till she closed her eyes."

Emilie now rose to retire, and receiving permission to visit the abbess in the morning, she returned to her own parlour. Emilie's respect, amounting to veneration for that extraordinary woman, was encreasing hourly—she had never yet met with a character at all resembling the abbess's, and she felt almost inclined to become an idolator.

The abbess had preserved a friendship undiminished in strength for three different persons, and that for a period of thirty or forty years; each of whom presented a character wholly opposite; of

these friends the hand of death had deprived her, but they separately retained their affection for her to the latest period of their lives.

Two of her friends had left families, to whom she had extended her affectionate services, and friendly counsel, under circumstances the most difficult and delicate, in which her constancy could be tried.

By one member of those families the tear of gratitude had been frequently poured forth, whilst dwelling in absence from her, on the remembrance of her virtues.

The calamitous tale of Paulina had made a deep impression on Emilie's mind, and she felt anxious for its conclusion.

"What varied miseries," said she, "doth this world present to our view, happy am I in having so well escaped their contagion.

"The flowers of hope and joy have

never, indeed, blossomed in my path of life; but I have yet been spared the sharp thorns which many of my fellow travellers encounter."

Emilie retired to rest, and after passing a tranquil night, arose and wandered out in the gardens till the hour fixed for her visit to the abbess, who employed her in reading till dinner, after which she waited till vespers were finished, and then repaired to the cell of Paulina, whom she found apparently weaker, and more depressed than the evening before.

She had heard of the death of sister Mary, who had died the same hour the night preceding, and the convent bell now sounding at intervals on her ear, encreased the gloom that twilight had thrown over the surrounding objects.

Paulina took the hand of Emilie, and grasping it within her's, prepared to enter upon the sequel of the history.

" I will pass over the closing scene of

my father's life, because I cannot bear to dwell on the recollection which it produces. After his death, which filled me with despair, Carlini proposed that I should accompany him to Venice; to this proposal however my aunt was unwilling to consent, and he could only obtain her permission to take me there for a short time, promising, that should his regiment be ordered elsewhere, he would convey me back to her protection.

"The fatal morning arrived on which we set out, and on reaching Venice, Carlini took a small house in its environs for a few months.

"In our present situation we were not expected to mingle with society; we had lost a father in the fullest, and most endearing sense of the word; we felt the void, and sought not consolation in inferior enjoyments.

"I daily hoped, yet dreaded, to have some intelligence of the Signor. My

brother had never spoken of him since we last met, and I feared to make any enquiries, lest my agitation should betray me.

"Some weeks passed in this melancholy state, when one evening, after an absence of some hours, Carlini came into the room where I was sitting, and proposed to me to accompany him to an exhibition of paintings, the property of a Venetian nobleman, which were to be disposed of during the course of that week.

"I felt no inclination to leave the house, but unwilling to pain him by a refusal, I consented, and throwing on my veil, we proceeded to the rooms, where a great concourse of people were assembled.

"Much engrossed by my attention to the paintings, and employed in contemplating one which particularly attracted my notice, I did not raise my eyes for some moments; they were however

called off from their present object by an unusual bustle in the room, and turning round, I beheld the Signor, accompanied by a very lovely woman who was leaning on his arm, and appeared to be conversing with him on some subject which deeply interested her.

" I had sufficient resolution to conceal the agony of mind which this sight occasioned me; I felt a sudden faintness come over me, and complaining of that sensation to Carlini, he prepared to make way for me through the croud.

" On leaving the room we again encountered the same objects, that had already nearly deprived me of reason; attracted, I suppose, by the mourning habit that I wore, and desirous of discovering if I was any one whom he knew, the Signor turned round.

" At that moment I heard the lady interrogate him respecting me, if he was acquainted with my name; he answered in the negative.

" I raised my eye, which met his; he shrunk back as if a spectre had crossed him; but in endeavouring to pass us, his sword caught in some part of my drapery, he stopped to disengage it, when forgetting my resolution, I shrieked aloud and fell on Carlini's shoulder.

" He was ignorant of the cause of my agitation, but on turning round discovered the Signor; he spoke to him very coolly, and the croud dispersing we immediately quitted the room.

" On our road home Carlini did not once mention the Signor's name; but expressed his fears that I had suffered from the heat. I only faintly replied to his enquires. As we were sat he adverted to our meeting with the Signor. " The lady we saw with him," said Carlini, " is the same with whom the matrimonial treaty is on foot.

" I believe I once mentioned the circumstance in a letter to you; but the Signor and I are not now on very ami-

cable terms. I saw that he avoided me, and I was too proud to remind him, by obtruding myself on his society, of obligations to me and mine, which he seems anxious to forget."

"The dreadful moment had now arrived, when, torn by emotions too powerful to be restrained, the fatal truth was to be revealed. I threw myself on my knees before Carlini; behold, I said, his wretched wife.

"For a moment he turned from me, then raising me up, and folding me in his arms, "My sister," he exclaimed, "the wife of the Signor, gracious God!" he rose from his seat and traversed the apartment in excessive agitation.

"This arm then," he added, "which has been raised in its country's defence, shall it not defend the honour of a sister, and avenge her cause.

"Yes, I will fly to him, and demand restitution of her injured rights. I will hold him up to society in the detestable

light of villainy; he shall be branded with the ignomy that his conduct merits."

"Irritated almost to madness, and forgetful of my situation, Carlini sought out the Signor and demanded immediate retribution. One person was alone privy to the interview. No time was given for deliberation previous to an event that terminated in death; they rushed to the field, they fought, my Carlini fell!

"Oh God! never shall I forget the hour when bleeding, dying, the form of that brother so fondly loved, was first presented to my eyes. The fatal secret of my marriage was only known by one individual, a youth in the Signor's service, and still remained concealed; nor was the cause of that dreadful rencontre ever known.

"I determined in solitude and repentance, to expiate my errors, and pass the remainder of a wretched life.

" Never," said Paulina, grasping the hand of Emilie, " can the remembrance of my crimes and sufferings be obliterated, till the hand of death shall close my eyes on the miseries of the world.

" Oh, Chiaramonti! miserable was that hour when you entered the habitation of my father!"

Paulina paused, and glancing her eye towards Emilie, wildly gazed on her face. What a history had this single sentence unfolded! Emilie continued silently regarding Paulina, whilst her whole frame shook, and floods of tears were pouring down her face.

Here then was the dreadful mystery unravalled, and in this afflicted repentant being, did she behold the wife of the Marchese.

" From that hour," continued Paulina, " have I never seen the author of my miseries. My sad story is brought to a termination, my life draws nigh to a

close, remember the sorrows of sister Paulina, and take warning from her unhappy fate."

Emilie was lost in confusion on the discovery she had made; she arose from her seat, and after expressing to Paulina her grateful acknowledgments for that proof of her confidence with which she had honoured her, she retired to her chamber, where, prostrating herself before the Father of the Universe, she poured forth her grateful thanks, that by his conducting hand she had been blessed with fortitude to flee from the evils that had awaited her.

When sufficiently composed for reflection, Emilie determined to conceal from Paulina that she had any knowledge of the Marchese; she had no doubt of his being the same from whose persecutions she sought a refuge, yet part of the mystery remained undeveloped.

It was evident that Paulina had never resided at any of the Marchese's seats;

nor did Emilie understand that he had been a younger brother; yet she knew from the Chevalier, that the Marchese was formerly in the army, and the time of his marriage agreed with the period that had since elapsed.

Emilie had once heard from the Chevalier since their separation, and her reply to his letter could scarcely have reached him.

She wished to have made him privy to this discovery; but that would have been betraying the confidence reposed in her, and honour forbade her revealing it, even to him.

The pictures still remained in Emilie's possession, and she again examined the countenance of the lady; she did not, however, perceive any resemblance in it to sister Paulina.

The fragment, Emilie conceived, could not be the production of her pen, yet it was evidently written by one who had suffered desertion from a husband.—

Could Paulina then have concealed any part of her history? yet that was very improbable, since she had been explicit, even in the exposure of her errors.

One person Paulina had mentioned as being privy to the fatal rencontre that terminated the life of Carlini, and Emilie's thoughts reverted to the Marchese's secretary. She recollected the Chevalier's having mentioned his fears that her union with his master should take place. Various were the conjectures that took place of each other, and Emilie's mind was harrassed by dwelling on this painful subject.

On the following morning the abbess informed Emilie, that it was the intention of the community, to inter the remains of sister Mary that evening, and she prepared herself to witness the solemn obsequies.

At eight o'clock the nuns assembled in the abbess's parlour to form a melancholy procession. Sister Mary had been

much beloved, and every individual of that society bore testimony to her worth.

The fortitude of the superior was seldom shaken, yet on this evening her spirits were unusually depressed. As she delivered to the sisters a few pious exhortations, and adverting to the deceased, pronounced her eulogy, on the virtues that adorned her character, her voice faultered—the tears chased each other down her cheek—she paused—and the grief of the sisters displayed itself in loud sobs.

"It is not for us," continued she, "my daughters, to grieve for our friend's release from a state of trial; let us whilst we patiently resign her into the bosom of her father, endeavour to imitate her virtues; this is the most grateful tribute we can bestow on her memory.

"Those mourn the dead who live as they desire."

The procession now commenced; the

bell of the convent sounded mournfully on the gale; and the loud swelling of the organ, as she entered the chapel, struck an awful sensation on Emilie's mind.

It was dimly lighted, and a solemn silence reigned throughout, as the sisters chaunted in heavenly strains, a requium to the deceased; the light was partially diffused across that part of the building, and fell on the mild countenance of the venerable abbess, whose eyes were raised in calm resignation, as she kneeled by the remains of her friend. The service concluded, and on returning to the convent, the sisters separated.

CHAPTER LVII.

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel.
SHAKESPEARE.

BUOYED up from day to day by the hope of hearing of her husband, Jessica had thus long been withheld from returning to England. Valdesa's silence however occasioned her so many pangs, so many hours of sorrowful anxiety, that she determined to terminate this suspence, by setting out for that country; and on the following morning, when she met Monsieur Delaborde and Madamoiselle at breakfast, Jessica mentioned to them her intention.

They expressed their deep regret at the thoughts of her departure, though they could not, under present circumstances, solicit her longer continuance.

It was a point too delicate on which to advise, and her friends thought it best to allow her inclinations to govern, where her feelings were so deeply interested.

Madamoiselle Delaborde had become more silent and more sad on this occasion, than Jessica had ever expected to see her, and it was a compliment that drew tears from her eyes; Monsieur too appeared very uneasy, and Delaborde, though he spoke little, felt deeply.

"Of what were you thinking, Adellé," said Jessica, as she observed her sitting apparently lost in reflection.

"I was thinking," said she, "if I must make you acquainted with the subject of my ruminations, how hard it is that when we have just met with a being after our own hearts, that we can take

by the hand, and say, I am your's till death; that some aukward untoward person, or circumstance, is certain to separate us from them. Now this is exactly what I have been fearing for some time past; so I am to be torn from my dear old Philip, my little Hanbury, and though last, not least in love, the Signora herself."

She rose from her seat, and throwing her arms round Jessica's neck, burst into an agony of tears. Jessica was much moved by this proof of her friend's affection.

"Adellé," said her father, "I am surprised to witness such a want of fortitude in you. Our separation from the Signora, I hope and trust, will not be lasting; it is prompted by necessity; to that we are all obliged to yield, and sacrifice to it's imperious laws, the feelings of inclination.

"The Signora, you recollect, has a husband, whose higher claims give him

consequence in her conduct, which our's do not, and I cannot be so unjust as to wish her, for our gratification, to sacrifice her duty.

"I do not believe," said Madamoiselle, "that the Signor loves her better than we do, and I wish from my heart that I may never again meet with a person for whom it is possible to care three straws; if any one approaches me in future, who appears the least agreeable, I shall make a point of running away from them."

"And yet," said Delaborde, "you have been on the rack, for I know not how many days, to form an acquaintance with an old gentleman, whom, though you think very agreeable, makes a point of running away from you."

"But I trust," interrupted Jessica, "that your sister will allow me an opportunity of expressing to her, in my own country, my sense of those unmerited obligations which herself and

family have conferred on me;" Jessica paused, her voice faultered, "for never," continued she, "can I forget that hour when unknown, unfriended, unprotected, you sought me, and extended to me your friendship and protection."

Jessica burst into tears, and Monsieur, taking her hand, entreated she would think of those things no more.

"No," said she, "I wish not to forget them, they have served to raise my ideas of human nature, and it is a source of pleasure to me, to dwell on their remembrance."

Jessica was anxious to leave Montpelier as early as possible, and Monsieur Delaborde applied for proper accomodotions for herself, Philip, and a young woman, whom she had engaged to attend her child.

One week alone was now allotted for her residence amongst those, whose affectionate services had made so deep an impression on her heart, and this week

Jessica felt inclined to wish, for their and her own sake, had already elapsed.

Adellé was counting the hours, she had yet to spend in the society of her friend, two or three times, in the course of the day, and then she would add, "you go from us, and we shall never see you more."

"But why," said Jessica, "should you distress yourself with such a surmise, the chance of our meeting, and again passing many hours together, is certainly in our favor, we are both young, and though countries will soon divide us from each other, yet with fond delight I shall look forward to our reunion, and dwell in absence on the comforts I have known under this hospitable roof."

"But what," said Adellé, "can compensate to us for the loss of a valued friend? No, I shall think of the days I have passed with you, till every thing will become so tiresome, and so insipid,

that I shall be a burthen to myself and others."

Jessica could not help smiling at this description of Adellé's. "You may smile, my dear Signora," continued she, "for you are going to a husband who will comfort and console you, taking along with you a child, that would gladden the heart, even of that old man hater at Montpelier. But I have no husband, no child, and indeed," throwing her arms round Jessica, "I am very wretched."

In scenes like this, did Jessica's days pass, after she had declared her resolution of leaving her friends.

END OF VOL. II.

Brooke, Printer, Paternoster-Row.

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